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Mores catholici

Mores Catholici;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

[Kenelm H. Digby.]

BOOK VII.

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MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

THE SEVENTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

ENTERING upon the fifth steep of this mount, from which the course of past ages is beheld, we seem forthwith ascending to hear behind us, chaunted sweet, "Blessed the merciful," and "Happy thou, who didst the naked clothe, the hungry feed, the erring counsel, and extend pity to the dead;" and methinks we are seen to pause and look back, like men doubtful of the way that they have taken, for such is the character which faith has stamped on ages which it formed, that, according as we advance through the different divisions of beatitude, the present seems always to suggest the fitting title which should distinguish them from all others in the history of the world. At each stage we thought we had only then discovered the proper qualification; they were ages of the poor in spirit we said at first; then, after a time, it seemed more precise to style them ages of meekness. Proceeding further, we thought it should be rather of blessed mourning. At the last, we were convinced that a hunger and thirst after justice formed their distinctive character; and lo, now, as if all had been imperfectly discerned hitherto, looking forward to what is coming, we seem to have suddenly found out, for the first time, the accurate expression, when we define them ages of mercy, ages of charity or love. "The fifth beatitude," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "deservedly follows the preceding; for mercy has its birth from them, since, if humility goes

before, and the mind becomes meek, and mourns for sins, and thirsts for justice, afterwards will spring pious mercy; and if means of assisting should be wanting, compassion will not be wanting *."

The ancient philosopher complained, that while men were writing in praise of many things, there was no one found to set forth the admirable excellence of love. He says, that he had lately opened a book by a wise man, in which was the praise of salt, showing its immense utility; and he takes occasion, in his usual style of mirth and gravity combined, to hint at instances of many other things equally unfitted, as one might suppose, to be the subject of a panegyric, which are nevertheless found extolled in formal encomiums. In modern times, too, the disposition of men cannot be noted as deficient in regard to the extension of praise: innumerable things obtain it; —speeches, loans, quadruple treaties, bazaars, if built on the site of demolished churches and monasteries, projected laws respecting a new division of property, new projects for securing it, treadmills, patent locks, new policemen, new prisons, perhaps;—but if we exclude from consideration those authors who adhere to the Catholic faith, I believe we might add, in the words of the same philosopher, that no one man has undertaken to praise love worthily. Ἔρωτα ἀξίως ὑμνῆσαι. The generations past, which were familiarized with the sentences of a Chrysostom and an Augustin, and which heard, besides those ancient holy fathers, a Fulgentius, a Thomas, of Aquin, a Bonaventura, a Theresa, a Catherine of Genoa, a Catherine of Sienna, or a Matilda, might be consoled amidst all the calamities which were incident to their state of civilization, by considering how different it was with them, when love was glorified in the human intelligence, and recognized as the only remedy for the woes of the human race; when love, though so sweet a word, was found sweeter still in exercise, in relation to learning, to philosophy, to manners, to legislation, to government; when men who could not, as S. Augustin says, "always speak about it, for many different actions left not leisure to their tongues to speak incessantly on love, knew well that their tongues could treat on nothing better, and what they could not always speak about, were

* S. Bernard. Senens. Serm. IX.

able still constantly to preserve * ;" when those, too, were not the objects of least veneration, who could affirm, like the Sage of Athens, though in a new and sweeter style, that they knew nothing of those grand and famous questions, though they were to wish it ever so much, which were discussed with such applause in the schools, as of old they had been by Prodicus, the Chian, and Gorgias, the Leontine, and Polus, the Agregentine, and by many others; but who said always, and everywhere, that in short they knew nothing, excepting a certain little lesson of love, πλήν γε σμικροῦ τινος μαθήματος τῶν ἐρωτικῶν †. This the great Augustine would affirm, who says, "Ask yourself what progress have you made in charity, and according to the answer of your heart you may estimate the measure of your approach to heaven ‡." This the blessed Gregory would say, who shows that all the commandments are concerning love, and that all are only one precept. "Our Lord's precepts," saith he, "are many, and only one;—many by diversity of work, and only one in the root of love." This would be the boast of the Abbot Engipius, whom the sixth age heard, whose vast compilation, arranged under upwards of three hundred heads, embraces in the first and last place the subject of charity as the beginning and the end of perfection. This is the conclusion to which all the wise, holy sentences, collected by that indefatigable Vincent, of Beauvais, will lead, who shows, that the whole of human duty is comprised in the twofold charity, which has for its objects God and man §. This is the sum of all the wisdom imparted to the angel of the school, who shows, that the perfection of the spiritual life consists essentially in charity ‖; and this comprises all that sweet and subtle science which rendered Henry, of Ghent, though impenetrable in solemn grandeur to the weak sight of modern observers, so dear to the great Christian Platonists of Florence in the sixteenth century, who learned from him to believe, that love is the plenitude and end of all the law, and of all the holy Scriptures ¶. Each scholastic

* Tractat. VI. in Epist. B. Joan. † Theagees.
‡ Tract. IX. in Epist. B. Joan.
§ Vincent Bellov. Speculum hist. lib. xviii. c. 95.
‖ S. Thom. Tract. de perfect. Christiana.
¶ Henrici Summ. Art. VIII. q. iii. f. 65.

philosopher, each mystic theologian, of the middle ages might use the poet's words, and say, "Count of me but as one who am the scribe of love; for when he breathes, I take up my pen, and as he dictates, write." This, in short, all the faithful multitude that follow where the fisherman hath led, would repeat with one voice, We know nothing, except a little lesson of love. From this springs all our science, all our theology, all our religion; for "Charity," as St. Bonaventura says, "compriseth all virtue, in the same manner as God containeth in himself all good." It is only as charity produces different effects, according to the occasions presented of opposing evil, or of embracing good, that it assumes different names and forms; for, as S. Augustine says, "virtue is nothing but well-directed love, inducing us to love what we ought to love, and to hate what is worthy of hatred *." "What is temperance," asks blessed Œlred, of Rivaux, "but love which no pleasure seduceth? What is prudence but love, which no error enticeth? What is fortitude but love, which endureth adverse things with courage? What is justice but love, which composeth, by a certain charm, the inequalities of this life †? What, in short, is the whole of Catholic religion but a certain little lesson of love?" Πλήν γε σμικροῦ τινος μαθήματος τῶν ἐρωτικῶν. This, and nothing but this, was the lesson conveyed throughout all lands, even unto the ends of the earth, by the missionaries of Rome, where love sat enthroned and glorified, as if to verify, in latter days of grace, what had been predicted through the blind Pagans, when Eros, or Love, was the mysterious name of that city. Few, consequently, are the things of which the old instructors speak, as Alanus de Insulis observes, in his Summary of the Preacher's Art ‡. St. Bernard deemed that even letters became, in general, superfluous. "Quiescant a dictando ingenia," saith he, "labia a confabulando, a scribendo digiti, a discurrendo nuntii: non autem quiescant corda die ac nocte meditari in lege Domini, quæ est caritas §."

The scholastic philosophers say, that the gift of counsel

* S. Bonaventura, De sept. grad. vit. spiritual. cap. 26.
† Œlredi Speculum Charitatis, lib. i. cap. 31.
‡ Alani de Insulis, Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, cap. 1.
§ Epist. XC.

brings the fifth beatitude; for, as St. Augustin remarks, the only remedy to preserve us from so many evils being to remit to others, and to give *; and utility being the end of counsel, the precept of mercy or charity is evidently what belongs to counsel. "By mercy," says St. Bonaventura, "man merits in this world grace, in death confidence, in judgment mercy, in heaven glory." There is no other utility but what is comprised here, and this is the end of the precept, according to St. Augustine; "for God," saith he, "sheweth mercy to us, on account of his own goodness, but we, in turn, show mercy to one another on account of Him: that is, He has compassion on us, that we may enjoy Himself; but we show compassion to one another, in order that we may enjoy Him; not that the great gain which is brought by charity was thought to entitle man to boast as if he owed the blissful consummation to himself." Recollect, reader, what was shewn from history in the last book, and thou wilt be free from such suspicion. By love divine, man was wholly immerged in the abyss of Christ's merits, and it was love which caused them to be applicable to him. As St. Bernard says, "charitas mercenaria non est, et tamen sine mercede non est†."

The ages of faith, in relation to the beatitude of mercy or love, form an epoch clearly distinct from all others of which history speaks, though still in harmony with the voice of ancient tradition, and the deepest sentiment of original nature. "Before the birth of love," Socrates says, "many fearful things took place through the empire of necessity; but," he adds, "when this god was born, all good things arose to men." We may remark, however, that the birth of love in philosophic fable was followed by no such universal happy effects, excepting in the song of poets, or the reveries of those who sought strength and consolation from their images. Cruel of heart were the children of men, merciless the strong, and without hope the weak, till this bright stranger, charity, came down from heaven to transform all things, and to destroy for the redeemed race that stern kingdom of which Plato spoke; stranger, of a truth, might she be called, amongst even the sages who had sung her praise; for to

* De Serm. Dom. in Monte.
† De Doct. Christ. lib. i. 30.

repay evil to an enemy, as well as kindness to a friend, entered into the ideal of justice, according to Simonides, whom Socrates calls a wise and a divine man, and who defined justice to be the rendering to every man his due * ; and stranger must she have been, too, in that renowned fellowship, whose generous friendships are consigned to everlasting memory; for if the Pythagoræans were known to treat those whom they loved as gods, they were at least accused of treating all other men as brutes. It is true, they used to evince friendship for one another, even without having ever seen each other; on the mere recognition of their peculiar sign. It is related, that a Pythagoræan, making a long journey on foot, came to an inn, where he fell sick, and continued long on his bed to the great expense of the landlord, who provided him with everything needful. As the disease proved fatal, the dying man inscribed a certain symbol on a tablet, and told the landlord, in return for his humanity, to suspend that near the public way, and to watch if any one should stop to observe it; for that such a person would be sure to repay him. A long time after, a certain Pythagoræan passed that way, and having observed the tablet, knew by the symbol what it meant; and after making inquiry, not only paid the innkeeper what he had expended, but presented him with a large sum beside †. This, however, resembled rather the spirit of the secret societies, as they are constituted in modern times, than the comprehensive charity which attended faith. It was, indeed, a magnificent and truly divine thought which we find expressed in the writings of Plato, "that all the sacrifices, and the things over which sacred science presided, and by which the Divinity unites himself with men, had nothing else for their object but the maintenance of love, and its application as a remedy ‡. Whether regarded as a tradition, or as the conception of a mighty soul, it excites astonishment, and somewhat of veneration: but there ends the prodigy; for if we open history in the hopes of finding some trace of its action, or some foundation for its support, in the deeds of men, we shall be utterly disappointed. It is, therefore, merely an isolated sentence,—a literary curiosity,—or, at the most, an evi-

* De Repub. lib. i.

† Jamblich. de Pythagoric. vita, cap. 33.

‡ Conviv. 13.

dence of the height to which one individual genius had soared in imagination, solitary in the tide of times.

The love or charity, which was the source from which so much good flowed to the human race during the ages of faith, was a grace imparted by the Catholic religion, divine, and so far from being identical with natural love, that the latter might exist without there being the least approximation made towards its acquirement. "When any creature loves another on account of something of its own, or if a creature love God on account of something else, then," said the philosophers of the middle ages, "all things are false; and this love is perfectly belonging to nature; for nature, as nature, can attain to no other love but this; for as nature, it loves nothing but itself *. "The natural life," said they, "when there is a cunning, agile, and fervent nature, is so multifarious and intricate; it seeks and finds, and that for its own sake, so many angles, falsehoods, and frauds, that it cannot be said or written. But whatever of divine love is in a deified or divine man, that is so simple, so right, and just, that it never can be explained or written, and it cannot even be known, unless where it exists. Where it does not exist, it cannot be believed or known." Raymund Jordan, celebrated under the name of Idiota, in his contemplations on the blessed Virgin, addresses her in these terms:— "Thou hast loved thy neighbour as thyself; thou hast loved him without regard to recompence, or to utility of any kind: but thou hast loved him cordially, because thou didst desire only that he might serve God, behold God, and possess eternal life †." That happiness required men neither to injure others, nor to be injured by them, was the saying of Plato ‡, who adds, that the former involved no difficulty; but how could he have been made to believe that the power of not being injured might be gained with equal facility, which, in fact, follows the reception of this divine gift of charity, according to which the very fact of being injured may be converted into a source of the greatest good, by the occasion which it offers of practising virtue?

It is difficult for the soul of man not to love some-

* Theologia Germanica, cap. 39.
† Idiota de B. Virgine, Pars xi. contemp. 111.
‡ De Legibus, lib. viii.

thing; it must of necessity be under the dominion of some one affection or other: but there is a difference, and an insurmountable opposition, between the inclinations, which it may obey. "The love of the flesh," St. Jerome says, "is conquered by spiritual love; the desires of the flesh are extinguished by those of the spirit: the diminution of the one becomes the increase of the other *."

Men of the last century talked of philanthropy in a manner that proved they were far behind heathens in their discernment of moral relations. They pretended to love men, while they avowedly loved pleasure, riches, and glory; whereas the Gentile philosopher had shewn the absolute impossibility of uniting such loves. "No one," saith Epictetus, "who is a lover of riches, or a lover of pleasure, or a lover of glory, can be at the same time a lover of men." Marsilius Ficinus, in his letter to Bernard Oricellario, seems to have before his mind the ideal of these hypocrites, when he asks, "Quonam pacto potest insanus qui Deum odit, homines ullos, qui Dei imagines sunt, diligere?" Truly we are so constituted by nature, that neither can love be virtuous unless it be religious, nor religion true unless received with love. The love which animated the ages of faith was so excellent in its nature, that, as St. Francis de Sales says, "Neither men nor angels could produce it of themselves: the Holy Ghost alone could enkindle its divine flames in the human breast." It was in the mysteries of faith that men of the middle ages learned to love each other; that warmth whose kindly force gave birth to flowers and fruits of holiness, enlivening the spirits of men contemplative, was all deduced from a divine light. For mark how the ancient ascetic traces it. "That men might become the children of God," says the author of the Manual ascribed to St. Augustin, "God condescends to become the child of man. Ah! who then any longer will be able to cherish any hatred against man, whose nature and resemblance he finds in the humanity of God? To hate him would be to hate God †."

All the ecstasies of Catholic devotion were to turn men as it were from the divine object of their adoration to

* Epist. ad Eustoch. † Cap. 26.

practise love and mercy towards their fellow-creatures. "O how admirable is the love of our Lord for men," exclaims St. Theresa, "since the greatest service that they can render him, is to abandon him to procure advantages for one another!"

In the writings of the great theologians of the middle age we may remark occasions in which the exercise of charity is enforced in such a manner as might lead one to suppose that it would interfere with the natural and lawful desires consequent upon faith. Such is that passage in which the master of the sentences says, "We may wish that the saints should perfect their passion, on their account and on our own, though it is only by that of Christ we are redeemed; and we may wish them to be delivered from it. He who should have wished that St. Paul might decline his passion and escape the hands of the wicked, and this through the compassion of piety, would also have had a good will *."

St. Bernard speaks, in a very remarkable manner, of the order of charity. "Let us love," saith he, "in deed and in truth, because we may be more moved to deeds of mercy by a certain impulse of vivid truth than by the affection of that charity. He hath ordained charity in me, saith the text—which of these? Both, but in an opposite order; for the charity of deed prefers the inferior—that of affection the superior, things. For in a well-affected mind no doubt the love of God is preferred to the love of men—that of more perfect to that of weaker men—heaven to earth—eternity to time—soul to flesh. Yet in a well-ordered action, frequently or even always the opposite order is found; for we are more anxious and more often occupied respecting the care of our neighbour than the worship of God, and we attend to our weaker brethren with more diligent assiduity than to the more perfect; and we attend more to the peace of the world than to the glory of heaven, by a law and necessity of humanity; and through the disquietude of temporal care, we are scarcely permitted to feel any thing respecting eternal; and we are more employed about the weakness of our body than the care of our soul. So thus we make the last first, and the first last. Who doubts but that a man in prayer speaks

* Lib. i. Distinct. xlviii.

to God? and yet how often are we interrupted by charity, and taken away on account of those who need our assistance or our conversation? How often doth a good conscience lay aside the book, to apply to work of the hands? How often, in order to administer earthly things, must I justly refrain from celebrating mass? The order is preposterous, but necessity hath no law. The charity of deed, therefore, fulfils its order according to the command of the Father of the family, beginning from the last things,—pious, certainly, and just order, which accepteth not persons, nor considers the value of things, but the necessities of men *."

Inseparable, in fact, were the theological virtues; and therefore St. Augustin affirms, † "that if any one should fall from faith, of necessity he must also fall from charity; on which truth the whole of history is but a continued comment. Si à fide quisque ceciderit, à charitate etiam necesse est cadat." Ah, England! vessel without a pilot in tempestuous days, how clearly is this sentence verified in thee! when now thy living ones abide not without war, and one malicious gnaws another! How truly might one apply to thee the words of Dante!—

> "Seek, wretched one, around thy sea-coasts wide;
> Then homeward to thy bosom turn, and mark
> If any part of thee sweet charity enjoy!"

Thou wouldst not talk of loving wholesome bitterness, to encourage thy vituperative scribes, if thou hadst rightly marked what the Apostle says; but now mayest thou see the consequences of revolt, which makes such division and such party rage as needs no laboured phrase of mine to set it off.

Reader, I would not needlessly revive a theme that might seem to lead us into ways of accusation; but when it is a question of the charity of Catholic times, who for an instant can be insensible to the prodigious moral change which has taken place wherever there has been a renouncement or a diminution of the ancient faith? "God has done you a great favour," said the original author of the German Reform, addressing the inhabitants of Wittemberg, "and has given you the Word in all its

* In Cantica, Serm. IV.
† De Doct. Christ. lib. i. cap. 37.

purity; notwithstanding, I see no charity in you." "Our age," says another champion of the same opinions, "may seem sufficiently to have provided against the growth of idolatry in England: O that some order were taken for the increase of charity*!" Truly it was not so easy for them to find the concord of this discord, or to prevent their standard from being followed by a crowd of most impassioned admirers, resembling the Megarian poet, who longs impatiently to return to his country and be revenged on his political adversaries, whose blood he wishes to drink,

"Τῶν εἴη μέλαν αἷμα πιεῖν†."

While they whom one city or one house contained met with tongues so fierce conflicting, the dejected minstrel might demand,

> "Can piety the discord heal,
> Or staunch the death-feud's enmity?
> Can christian love, can patriot zeal,
> Can love of blessed charity?"

But it was evident, from the nature of the contest, that peace and the mercy of union were excluded. As Æschylus says, in the Agamemnon, "Pour oil in the same cup, and vinegar—in vain will you persuade the unsocial streams to mix." Witness the oil in the ascending movement of Catholicism, at the very time of the schism. In mystic vision God had spoken to the sainted advocate of Sienna, and had said, "I will ordain the reformation of the holy church according to thy desire, not by the sword or the cruelty of war, but with pacific quiet, with the tears and labours of my friends whom I have appointed as labourers for your souls in the mystic body of holy mother church, offering to me continual prayer for the salvation of all men, and bearing the fruits of virtues, doctrine, and example towards men‡." And such, in fact, was the progress—sweetly, insensibly, at first; without noise, without display, without the pride of science, without the parade of pompous words, humbly and powerfully, like the Gospel, did a St. Theresa, a St. John of the Cross, a Lewis of Blois, a St. Charles of

* Fuller's Thoughts, 209.
† Theognis, 785.
‡ S. Cath. Senensis, Tract. II. cap. 86.

Borremeo, turn the hearts of the evil and revolted spirits to the wisdom of the just. This was the oil, the love by which diabolic circumvention was avoided, and the carnal life excluded *. Witness the counteraction in the whole spirit and movement of the innovators. "I am proud and unpitiable," says the great German leader of Erfurt; "he that bites me shall be well bitten." When such were the chief meteors, can we wonder at discovering the original or reflected colour of those creatures which flocked and fluttered round them? Love was not in their looks, either to God or to each other. Wherever they passed, charity fled from before them. The whole form and tone of society was reversed; mercy was stigmatised as prevarication, all pity choked with custom of fell deeds. Nor was this spectacle new to the church. In early ages the heretics even attacked the doctrine of mercy. The Pelagians, by accepting the apathy of the stoics †, undermined it as effectually as the disciples of the Porch, who called mercy a vice; so that, Tertullian says, the philosophers were their patriarchs; and on other grounds the Montanists and Novatians opposed it, denying the efficacy of penitence; for which inhuman opinion, as Eusebius terms it, and most alien from fraternal charity, Novatus was condemned by Cornelius and a council of Fathers ‡. Still more direct was the hostility of the Manichæans to the doctrine of the blessed. St. Athanasius expressly says that there is no mercy with them, but that they deem compassion on the poor the work of an enemy; for which opinion he attacks the Eusebian Arians §. The cruelty of the Manichæans was the result of the impious and absurd dogma of Manes, respecting the creation of flesh and bread by the evil principle, and the infusion of soul into them; so that, St. Augustin says, "While they believe that bread weeps, they will not give it to a man whom they see weeping ||;" and elsewhere, "that though they should behold a man dying from hunger, they would forbid their disciples to give him bread, and would have more

* Idiotæ Contemp. c. 12.
† S. Hieron. ad Ctes. cont. Pelag.
‡ Euseb. vi. 35.
§ S. Athan. Ep. ad Solitar.
|| Cont. Adimant. XI.

compassion on a cucumber than on a man *." But in all ages, whatever may be the error chosen by disobedient men, the mere fact of their wishing to destroy unity is decisive of the question.

"He who remains separated from the mystic body of Christ," says Lewis of Blois, "does not live in God, and is not vivified by Christ, who is the head of the church. His works will profit him nothing, since he hath not charity; and he cannot have charity who divides the unity which is most dear to God and necessary to Christians. Although he should say a hundred or a thousand times that he had Christ for his foundation, he is deceived; he says what is not true: for he who deserts the body, deserts the head also; and it is impossible that he should have Christ for the foundation. The foundation of his faith is corrupt, and therefore whatever is built upon it must fall †."

"What would avail even sound faith," asks St. Augustin, "or the sound sacrament of the one faith, when the soundness of charity was destroyed by the deadly wound of schism? Men might talk of charity, but they could not possess it if they stood apart. Their own act of protestation was their own judgment. Diviserunt sibi vestimenta mea." "Hear, my brethren," adds St. Ambrose; "these vestments are his sacraments. The heretics have been able to divide them; but there was another vestment which no one divided: there was, says the Gospel, a tunic without seam, woven from the top throughout. What is this tunic but charity, which no one can divide? What is this tunic but unity? They cast lots for it; no one divides it. The heretics have been able to divide the sacraments, they have not been able to divide charity; and because they could not divide it, they withdrew, and it remained entire. No one ravishes it from the Catholic Church; and if without the Church there should be any who begin to possess it, they re-enter with it into her bosom, as the dove with the olive branch into the ark ‡." They enter the Church in loving, like St. Augustin, and they pass from the militant to the triumphant Church, celebrating the praise

* De Mor. Man. ii. 16.

† Ludovic. Blosius, Epist. ad Florentium.

‡ Enarratt. II. in Ps. 21.

of love, like the Count of Stolberg, with their last breath. If we compare, accordingly, the separate theologians who speak the most eloquently of the Almighty and of the love which is due to men, with those of the Catholic Church—as the Augustines, the Ephrems, the Gregories, the Bernards, the Francises, Dominicks, Ignatiuses, and others—whether eminent or obscure, whether in ancient or modern times, we shall at once discern the gulf which is between them. They all use the same expressions; but, as St. Francis de Sales remarks, "The words pronounced by these true lovers of the Almighty are inflamed and embalmed, if we may say so, with the delicious perfume of divine love; whereas, with the former, they are only cold expressions, which neither contain the force nor the sweetness of charity." In fine, wherever charity was found, the Catholic Church was found; for as St. Ambrose says, "Ubi perfecta charitas, ibi omnis fides *."

Leaving, now, the gall for the sweet fruit this history promises, I find, at first, two things to notice—the doctrine of the ages of faith, and its external operation; the manner in which the divine principle of charity, was intellectually developed or explained, and the visible fruits which sprung from it to the human race. Of the first, I have already briefly spoken; and little need be added here, since the whole moral teaching and philosophy of the middle ages may be said to be but a development and repetition of the one lesson of love which the Son of God bequeathed to men as the choicest inheritance. Every thing connected with the Catholic Church appertains to love, proceeds from love, terminates in love, and is, in fact, in its very essence, the ardour of love; so that on Holy Saturday, at the joyful opening of her glorious solemnities, after singing thrice allelujah, her only prayer is that God would infuse into us the spirit of his charity; thus implying that the sole object of the Paschal sacraments is the increase of love, to render concordant in piety those who are united in one faith. It matters not to which of her doctors or to what school we apply for information: there is but one dogma laid down with scientific precision, but one sentiment broadly and fervently expressed. There are some passages, how-

* S. Ambros. Epist. LXXIV.

ever, which may deserve more especial notice, as placing the practical evidence and consequences of this great principle in a point of view singularly striking. Thus St. Odo, the second Abbot of Cluni, says, "There are many things which demonstrate that there are men constituted in the Church who are infidels." And to prove this, he adds, "For as Christ, through charity, came in the flesh, it follows that he who has not charity denies that he came in the flesh; and as they accept the persons of men, therefore they deny Christ and truth. Behold, after this, while in the eyes of men they may be Christians, if strictly estimated before God, they have no faith and no title to the name*." This is any thing but common-place declamation. A similar instance occurs in the writings of St. Zeno of Verona, where he says, "Let us emulate each other, O my brethren in love! Let our respect for the image of our God make known our gratitude to him: for let us be assured that the injury done to the image falls on Him whom the image represents; and man is the image of his Maker†." To the same effect speaks Raban Maur: "Omnis quippe homo, in quantum homo est, diligendus est propter Deum: Deus vero propter seipsum ‡." "Behold what is learned in the house of discipline," says another ancient author: "to love God, to love your neighbour—God as God, your neighbour as yourself." The austere recluse, whose life is spent in the rigours of penitence, has no other learning. "All virtue and all perfection," says St. Catherine of Sienna, "proceeds from charity, and charity is nourished by humility. The way of life is the way of common charity, observing the commandments actually and the counsels mentally §." Blessed Macharius said that none could be clean of heart without being merciful to sinners; and with the same conviction St. Bernard remarks, that our Lord, in the order of beatitudes, places the merciful before the clean of heart; "For," he observes, "it is only after the exercise of such charity that the human heart can be made pure, and enabled to see that truth for whose love it was con-

* Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 172.
† S. Zenonis, Tract. II. lib. i.
‡ Rabani Mauri De Institut. Clericorum, lib. iii. 4.
§ S. Cath. Senens. Tract. I. 63.

tent to bear the evils of others *." St. Chrysostom even says, that if virginity should want the works of mercy, it will be cast out with the impure †. We find the same lesson inculcated in all books of the middle ages that answered to our classical works for popular instruction, such as the Doctrinal of Wisdom, by Guy de Roye, Archbishop of Sens, of which a copy was placed by authority in every parish church of that city and diocese, in order that the curates of the said parishes might read two or three chapters to the people, if any one should express a wish to hear something from it, there being an indulgence to all who should read from it for others. Here we read, "Faith without charity is mortal sin."

St. Cæsarius of Arles remarks, that however potent is the remedy of charity to heal the moral wounds, there is no man who may not procure it with the aid of God. "As for other good works," saith this guide of the fifth age, "there may perhaps be found an excuse when they are not practised; but there is no excuse where charity is wanting. Some one may say, 'I cannot fast,' but who can say, 'I cannot love?' One may say, 'Because of the weakness of my body, I cannot abstain from meat;' but who can say, 'I cannot love my enemies, nor pardon those who have offended me?' Let no one deceive himself, my dear brethren, for no one deceives God." Again, in reference to philosophy, mark the sayings of the middle age: "The fruit of science consists in charity," says Raban Maur ‡. "Whoever attains to the summit of wisdom, must of necessity attain to the highest point of charity; for no one is perfectly wise, unless he who perfectly loves—quia nemo perfecte sapit nisi is qui perfecte diligit §." Similarly, John Scot Erigena, showing that the end of philosophy can only be attained by the descent of divine wisdom and the ascent of the human intelligence, proves that both these means are the result of love. "For," saith he, quoting Maximus, "in proportion as the human intelligence ascends by charity, does the divine wisdom descend by mercy; and this is the cause and substance of all virtues ‖." "The law and

* De Gradibus Humil. 3. † Hom. 79 in Matt.
‡ De Institut. Clericorum, lib. iii. 4. § Id. iii. 5.
‖ Joan. Scot. Erig. de Divisione Naturæ, lib. i.

doctrine of God," says St. Augustin, "however just and holy and good, nevertheless killeth, if the spirit doth not give life, by which it may be held not as if by reading, but by loving." "In vain will the abundance of divine knowledge increase in us," saith Hugo of St. Victor, "unless the flame of divine charity likewise increase." How remarkable is it to hear the great philosophers of Italy, in the fifteenth century, declaring with Marsilius Ficinus, that they would rather praise benevolence or charity than genius*! They must have observed that the spirit of those first days of Christianity, when the Pagans used to be charmed on beholding the affection of Christians for each other, had been as it were embodied in the very ceremonial of the Catholic mysteries; for, as those cannot be aliens from love with whom is Truth, at those parts of the holy Mass where the priest has been reading in silence some celestial words which have elevated his soul to a great union with God, he turns round to the people and gives vent to the emotion which they have inspired by words of charity, praying that the Lord may be with them. And in fact, wherever the divine mysteries were celebrated, countenances were seen visibly proclaiming mercy, and that spiritual affection which is so beautifully expressed by Guy de Roye, Archbishop of Sens, in these words, at the conclusion of his Doctrinal de Sapience:—"Although I am not good, I wish greatly that all others may be good. I should wish to be the worst of all men in the world, not that I should become worse, for I need lose nothing, but that all others should be better than myself." We had occasion to remark, in a former book, that in the common intercourse of life, a form of salutation indicating love was generally used during the middle ages, insomuch that we find the neglect of it in any instance denounced as arguing a barbarity below the manners of brute animals, who, as the universal doctor remarks, are always seen to rejoice on meeting any others of their kind, and to greet them as it were with familiarity†. When the cruel discords between Guelph and Ghibelline had caused a suspension of this practice in Italy, we find a John of Vicenza and other holy preachers insisting on its being

* Mars. Ficin. Epist. lib. i.

† Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. 37.

resumed; so that not only in Lombardy, but in all the Italian provinces, it became again, we are told, the custom, as in other countries, for men on meeting to salute one another in the name of Jesus Christ; on observing which, an intelligent stranger might feel prompted to exclaim, like the Pagans of old, "See how they love one another!" Ah! the remark could never have been suggested in ages of faith—those ages of mercy, when there was so much more practical equality and freedom than ever can exist where infidels have sway,—See how they hate, and envy, and ridicule one another; for it was then frequently on earth as it will be hereafter eternally in the blissful seats, where the possession of good, as St. Augustin saith, "is in no manner lessened by the accession of partners;" and that possession, above all, was the object of desire, which the number of proprietors diminisheth not. "Give thanks to God," says Lewis of Blois, "for the perfection that you observe in other men. In this manner, delivered from envy, you will come by a divine charity to appropriate to yourself, in some degree, the goods of others*." The cause of all this was faith. From the very source of purest love there flowed daily into innumerable souls the grace which prompted the multitudinous works of goodness and pity; for who could approach the fountain of sweetness, and not bring back some degree of sweetness? Love, which came first through the ears, inspiring the hearts of the hearers, was an unquiet thing. Affliction had rest, temptation rest; but this knew no rest: for its object and its source were both infinite.

The character of mercy, in ages of faith, presents many especial points which should fix our attention, of which the first may be its universality. St. Bernard assigns, as one reason to explain the words of St. Paul, that he saw the world crucified by the obligations of vices, and that he was crucified to it by the effect of compassion†. That is a comment which no one but a Catholic doctor would ever have suggested. The principle of choice was not admitted in the sphere of charity; for the master of the sentences shows the obligation of loving all men in God, either for being good or

* Institut. Spirit. cap. 12.
† Serm. VII. de Quadrag.

for having the capacity of goodness, because they might be good *.

This duty was seen in action, in the daring charity of a Robert d'Arbrissel, the great missionary of the eleventh century, and founder of Fontevrault, who used to penetrate into the impure abodes of vice in order to announce to their wretched captives the mercy of God. On one of these occasions, at Rouen, he received the following answer: "Twenty years have I been in this place, and no one has ever come to speak to me of Christ and his goodness; yet if I knew that these things were true—" That word, that half-uttered wish sufficed: he seized the happy moment, led forth the victims, conducted them to the retreat which he had opened in the desert, and made them pass from the cruelty of the demon to the mercy of Christ†.

A similar act, imitating that abundant love of God which caused his blessed Son to descend into hell ‡, forms the subject of a drama written by the nun Hroswitha, and acted by her sisters in the convent of Gandersheim, in the eleventh century. Abraham is the title of the play in which this occurs; but the details are only borrowed from a legend of the fourth century, written by St. Ephrem, deacon of Edessa. Pope Innocent III. addressed letters to all the faithful of Christ, reminding them that among the works of charity proposed to us by the authority of the sacred page, as the evangelical text witnesseth, not the least is to recall the erring from the path of his error, and especially to invite to the bonds of a legitimate marriage women living voluptuously in open flagitiousness; and declaring therefore, by authority, that all persons who should rescue women from such places, and enable them to become wives, would contribute to the remission of their own sins §. He writes to the consuls and people of Viterbo, to admonish them not to permit any one to trouble the daughter of a certain citizen by denying her legitimacy; since, although born previous to the marriage of her parents, they had subsequently been married, and therefore their former off-

* Lib. III. Distinct. 27.
† MSS. de l'Abbaye de Vaulx Cernay Bayle Fontevrault.
‡ Idiotæ Contemp. VIII.
§ Epist. Innocentii III. lib. i. 112.

spring ought to be reputed legitimate according to the canons *. To a scholastic desiring to be admitted to holy orders, and at the same time confessing that the sins of his parents form an impediment, the same pontiff, considering his literature and honest conversation, makes void by apostolical benignity the impediment arising from his birth, and grants him permission to proceed to sacred orders, and to obtain canonically ecclesiastical benefices †. "It is pride," says Guy de Roye, "to scorn relations on account of sin. The holy Evangelist is not ashamed to recognize four women that were sinners as of the lineage of our Lord, according to his human nature ‡." The distance is certainly immense between this voice of an Archbishop of Sens, in ages of faith, and the morality of drawing-rooms at present in countries that boast of social perfection; but the fact is, that nothing like Pharisaical severity can be detected in Catholic manners during the ages when every act in violation of the law of God subjected offenders to the censures of the church. Maria Longa, the illustrious widow of the chancellor of the kingdom of Naples, and foundress of the hospital of Incurables in that capital, used to repair to haunts impure, and remonstrate with the unhappy persons whom she found there, many of whom, by persuasions and benignity, she rescued from the jaws of the infernal pit; providing for them future subsistence, either as holy attendants in her hospital, or as virtuous mothers of families §. St. Chrysostom says, "that there is nothing *οὕτω χαρακτηριστικὸν* as mercy, nothing so powerful to imprint a character on the mind," and, in fact, even on the external form; for Catholic charity marks the forehead of such persons with a certain indescribable sign. As a living author also observes, something attractive, unknown to themselves, emanates from them. One of this mould is no sooner beheld than a magic charm surrounds him. The outcasts and weak victims of disordered life love him at the first sight, and lay hold of his mantle; they supplicate him with joined palms to return, and cry out, "Save us." And were he

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. x. 109.
† Id. lib. xvi. 74.
‡ Le Doctrinal de Sapience.
§ Annales Capucinorum, an. 1542.

to pass on without seeming to regard their misery, they would be seized with terror, and convinced that the figure before their eyes was not him in reality, but a spirit and deluding phantom. As the disciples thought that night, when overtaken by the tempest, and seeing their Master approaching, they plied their oars with greater vigour, being consoled and encouraged; but when he wished to pass by them, they were thrown into dismay, and exclaimed that it was a spectre; for as they knew what was the humanity and compassion of his mind, they were convinced that, had it been indeed their sweet Master, it would never have left them thus to perish in the angry waves *.

It is clear, also, from innumerable passages in the histories and other books of the middle ages, that there was a desire to imitate to the letter the example of the Deity in that attribute of which the Church speaks, where she says, "The mercy of man is towards his neighbour, but the mercy of God is upon all flesh."

The ancients, in punishing cruelty to birds and beasts, expressly declared that they sought not to vindicate the animal, but to condemn a vice which might be dangerous to the republic †. Their acts, therefore, bore no resemblance to the tenderness of Catholic men in ages of faith, who deemed no creature of God unworthy of a participation in the effects of their good-will. Behold a most attractive picture which Alexander Hesse has lately presented to those who visit the gallery of the Louvre! The scene is at Florence, as we infer from the towers of the old ducal palace which are seen in the back ground. A group of persons is formed around a bird-catcher, who is reckoning money. A young man of noble form, in graceful attire, is opening the door of a cage from which a bird is escaping. Some empty cages are at his feet. The elder spectators are regarding what passes with looks of calm meditation that announce thoughts far beyond those of the young admirers, who with infinite delight are watching the birds as they fly round their deliverer. This man of mercy is Leonardo de Vinci, who used frequently, as Vasari relates, to purchase birds in cages for the sake of restoring them to liberty. When the streets of cities beheld such scenes, what might not have been

* Cresolii Anth. Sacra. † Quintil. v. 9. Phot. Cod. 279.

witnessed in the retreats of the religious? The reader will be able to judge from remembering the instances before given as illustrating the manners of the meek. St. Francis of Asisium has been seen employed in removing worms from the road, that they might not be trampled by travellers, considering that our Divine Redeemer compared himself to a worm of the earth, and also having compassion on the creatures of God. "Going to New Alexandria," says Sophronius, "we found Abbot John, who had spent eighty years in that monastery, so full of charity that he was pitiful also to brute animals. Early in the morning he used to give food to all the dogs that were in the monastery, and would even bring corn to the ants, and to the birds on the roof*." "These," says St. Francis de Sales, "are the admirable effects of a goodness and simplicity which the world cannot comprehend, but which nevertheless display a profound wisdom inspired by charity." In the modern schools they would be deemed beneath notice; yet how many understood and valued them even as titles to canonization in the ages which have been called barbarous. But it is with generations as with men individually: according to the remark of Marsilius Ficinus, "the stupid are more cruel than the ingenious." What a sublime instance of this mercy is furnished by the bulls of sovereign pontiffs, attaching the penalty of excommunication, and all its eternal consequences affecting the immortal souls of the reasonable creature, to the cruelty which is practised in those combats of animals which the Spaniards had persisted in celebrating from the days of Paganism! Pius V. declared that an attendance at such sanguinary spectacles was incompatible with the mercy of a Christian, and that whoever fell in such combats should be considered an apostate, and buried like the beasts whom he had tormented.

The love which was associated with faith did not consist in mere empty protestations, like the universal philanthropy of which the last century heard so much and felt so little. "I love you," says St. Ambrose, "as if you were my own sons; for nature is not more vehement in loving than grace. Yea, rather, we ought certainly to love more those whom we believe will be with

* Pratum Spirituale, cap. 184.

us for ever than those with whom we are only in this present world." That such views were realized, we can learn from the very tombs of the middle ages; for on that of Faledro, Duke of Venice in the eleventh century, which is in the Church of St. Mark, we read these lines: —

"Cunctaque jucunde faciens, dans semper abunde,
Ut fieret plenus quicunque veniret egenus;
Plus quoque longinquos refovens quam carne propinquos*."

Although to the efficacy of this divine love Christian history bears evidence in almost every page, it will not be without use to hear it attested by the ancient writers. To show this, they appeal to the stupendous mysteries of faith, the incarnation and death of Christ; for love caused God to die. "What more violent than love?" cries St. Bernard. "It triumphs over God; and yet what less violent, since it is love?" "When under the influence of love, every act of a man," says Richard of St. Victor, seems to him useless, nay, intolerable, unless it can concur and conduce to the one end of his desire. If he can enjoy what he loves, he thinks he has all things; without it, all things seem detestable, all things vile. Nothing can satiate the desire of his ardent mind: he thirsts and drinks, and yet by drinking he does not extinguish his thirst; but the more he drinks, the more he thirsts. Who can worthily explain the violence of this supreme degree of charity? What is there that penetrates deeper into the heart of man, that impels it with more vehemence †?"

St. Francis of Sales does not disdain to seek an illustration of divine love in the writings of Plato, whose very language he adopts, following St. Augustin, who shows that the term love has been rendered as sacred by the word of God as charity, and the great St. Denis, who also approves of it expressly in his treatise on divine names. In fact, the principle of that harmony in the social order, which was remarked in a former book, cannot be better represented than in the words of Socrates, where he argues that love must have been born in later times, since those old events among the gods of violence and chains which are related by Hesiod and

* Splend. Ven. in Thes. Antiq. Ital. V.

† Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentæ Charitatis, 1.

Parmenides, and which belong to the reign of necessity; for if love had then ruled, we should never have heard of such dreadful things, but all would have been friendship; since love brings union and joy to men, and causes εἰρήνην μὲν ἐν ἀνθρώποις, πελάγει δὲ γαλήνην. What more Catholic than his doctrine that the four cardinal virtues are included in love? and that love, being itself the best and most beautiful of things, is also the cause of whatever else is beautiful and good? "This," saith he, "causeth us to abound in friendly alliances, fraternities, and to agree with one another; being our guide in festivities, extending gentleness and mildness, and banishing all savage barbarism. For love," he continues, "is liberal of beneficence, φιλόδωρος εὐμενείας, but sparing of enmity, ἄδωρος δυσμενείας—the father of tenderness, of delicacy, of splendour, of grace, of desire, studious of all good, neglectful of all evil. In labour, in fear, in longing, in discourse, a guide, a companion, a helpmate; and the best of saviours, the ornament of men, the best and most perfect ruler, to whom every man should yield obedience, chaunting the sweetest hymns."

To what cause would you ascribe the generous acts of self-devotion recorded in the annals of Catholic ages, if not to that which even the Gentile sage would allege as alone capable of producing them. Love?—"They only," saith he, "who love are willing to die. And of this Alcestis, the daughter of Peleus, was an evidence to the Greeks, who desired to die alone for her husband; which devotion seemed so admirable not only to men, but even to the gods, that they gave her many and great gifts as a reward, and amongst them not only what they never gave but to a number easily counted, to return alive from Hades, but also in reality to lead back the soul of him whom she went to seek; but Orpheus the son of Œager they sent back from Hades without having gained his object: showing him only the phantom of his wife, for whom he came, but not giving her real person, because he seemed to be half-spirited and effeminate, being a harper, and not to have courage to die for love like Alcestis, but to be intent on contriving how he might enter Hades alive; therefore they awarded him this punishment, and caused him to die through means of his wife, not honouring him like Achilles, the son of Thetis, whom they sent to the islands of the happy,

because being told by his mother that he would die if he should kill Hector, but not killing him, that he should return home and live to old age, he dared nevertheless, bearing assistance to his friend Patroclus, and avenging him, not only to die for him, but die upon his dead body; and the gods more highly honoured Achilles even than Alcestis, since him only did they send to the islands of the happy, because the love which made him so dare was purely affection of the mind, and divine, and unconnected with the senses *." Can any language lay bare more completely the true principle of those exalted achievements of which all Catholic story rings? or how could we exhibit in a more striking manner the contrast which really exists between the Catholic spirit and that which emanates from every other rule? Consider the manners of the ages of faith, keeping this imagery of Plato in view, and you will find that which he faintly discerned, calling it the spirit of Alcestis and of Achilles every where. It is this which rendered possible all their institutions, which are now said to be impossible. Look around you, and what do you observe but the spirit of Orpheus, whom Plato styles a jongleur? It is not the voluntary and complete offering of a whole heart which is presented, but it is a spirit curious and knowing rather than loving, through which men stand to inquire whether the doing this or that will send their souls to hell; contriving, seeking half-measures, and selfish even in its dictates that would pass for generous.

To Plato again we might refer with advantage, when observing the connexion between the love of the blessed merciful and that wondrous development of the arts, as well as that acute and active intelligence, which characterised the ages of faith; for he remarks that not only in fortitude does love equal Mars, but that in prudence and wisdom it excels equally; since it is to that men owe the inventions of art;—an assertion which could only have been the result of speculation in him, for it was not verified until the commencement of an era that he did not live to see, but to which the experience of Catholic ages would lead all men to assent, although it is in contradiction to that of our modern civilization, which can

* Conviv. cap. 6, 7.

boast indeed of many surprising inventions, without the possibility of raising a question whether they can be traced to cupidity, or, like those which glorified the ages of faith, to the agency of divine love. Similarly in relation to the inheritance of the meek, we might explain, with Plato's assistance, why during those ages a larger portion of mankind participated in the enjoyment of the Muses; for he shows that every one under the influence of love becomes a poet. In like manner, we might appeal to his discernment in proof that it was love which made men hunger and thirst after justice. "What love desires," saith he, "must be something which it does not possess; since it is the nature of all desire to seek what is not actually enjoyed: therefore love, always desiring beauty, of which justice is the highest kind, cannot be itself beautiful; and always desiring goodness, must be wanting in goodness: not that it is evil, which would be an impious suggestion; for it is not necessary that what is not beautiful should be vile, or that what is not wise should be ignorant;—*ὅτι ἔστι τι μεταξὺ σοφίας καὶ ἀμαθίας*, which is *ἡ ὀρθὴ δόξα*. Therefore love holds a middle place between perfection and imperfection; it is something between pure and vile, good and evil, mortal and immortal, divine and human. "Love," he observes, "is poor; it goes barefoot, it reposes on the ground, it is like a beggar who is stretched at the door of a house." What could better explain the mystery of the lives of many holy men in ages of faith? Was it not love which induced the great St. Francis to embrace such perfect poverty, and to leave such rules of poverty to his order? Was it not love which, after reducing St. Francis Xavier to extreme indigence, inspired him to set out for the new world, to travel through the Indies and Japan, clothed in the tattered garments of a beggar? Was it not love which induced St. Charles Boromeo to practise the most strict poverty amidst the immense riches attached to his high birth and to his dignities of cardinal and archbishop? so that Panigarole compared him to a dog which in its master's house eats only bread, drinks only water, and sleeps upon straw.

The conviction of men during the ages of faith, respecting the happiness resulting from this divine possession, cannot be better expressed than in the very words

of the same philosopher, who says,“ Love is the remedy for those things, from the cure of which the greatest happiness results to the human race*.”

O felix hominum ġenus,
Si vestros animos Amor,
Quo cœlum regitur, regat †!

This, they would infer, is that fire, without which all the gifts of creation had been useless to men‡. “Si dederit homo omnem substantiam domus suæ pro dilectione, quasi nihil despiciet eam.” “Let every man ask his conscience,” says Richard of St. Victor, “and doubtless he will find that as nothing is better, so nothing is sweeter than charity§. There is this difference,” he observes, “between the delights of charity and those of wisdom; that the latter can be drawn from one’s own heart, but the intimate delights of charity are drawn from the heart of another; for he who greatly loves, and desires equally to be loved, is not so much delighted as anxious to draw that sweetness of love for which he thirsts from the heart of the one he loves; but the delights of wisdom are so much the more delightful, as they are drawn from one’s own heart‖.” “True,” says he, elsewhere, “charity woundeth, charity enslaveth, charity maketh weak, charity bringeth defect; but in so doing, it only conferreth the greater felicity. O quam male fortis est, quem tot charitatis vincula tenere non possunt. O quam male liber est, quem hujus captivitatis jura non involvunt¶.”

CHAPTER II.

The charity of the blessed merciful in ages of faith, was beheld in the twofold operation of refraining them from

* Conviv. cap. 14.
† Boeth. Lib. II. 8.
‡ Plat. Protagoras.
§ De Trinitate, I. lib. iii. 3.
‖ Id. ¶ Id. Tractat. de quatuor gradibus violentæ Charitatis.

evil, and of prompting them to works of love, in reference to which history is not silent, as the subsequent pages of this book will, I believe, abundantly demonstrate. The necessity which urged them to undergo this action, is represented by those who guided them as constituting the last of those burdens spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, styled the burden of the beasts of the south, of those who carry the south wind, "which signifies," saith blessed Ælred, "the Holy Spirit, by whose impulse their happy souls are impelled and directed hither and thither, carrying the burden of the south, of the Spirit, that is the charity of God;" which was the burden that Paul sustained, when he said, "quis infirmatur et ego non infirmor?" and again, "Tristitia mihi magna est, et continuus dolor cordi meo pro fratribus meis secundum carnem." The men whom we are about to behold will be seen, therefore, loaded with many burdens,—loaded with the infirmity of others,—loaded with the necessity of others,—loaded with the perversity of others. We shall behold them carrying as their burden the hunger of the poor, the oppression of the weak, the misery of the sick, the temptation of the prosperous, the calamity of the fallen. They are loaded with the tribulation of the people, the desolation of orphans, the tears of widows, the affliction of captives. They fulfil the law of Christ, by bearing the burdens of their brethren. What is that burden? Truly the infirmities of their manners, and of their bodies *.

Love being in the heart, the root of all evil was cut off at once; and, therefore, whatever effects we shall hereafter witness, will be nothing but the natural consequence of that first cause; but it will be well, in the beginning of our inquiry, to consider that which is said by Truth itself to come immediately out of the abundance of the heart, and to attempt to show from history, that what the mouth spoke, indicated the possession of a divine beatitude; for though nothing seems more volatile, and less capable of being fixed in chronicles, than the familiar speech of men, the conversations of the middle age are, notwithstanding, in respect to charity, a subject perfectly within the reach of historical investigation.

Not without serious cause, and deep mystery, say an-

* D. Ælredi Serm. in Isaiæ cap. 13.

cient writers, did Christ, when about to cure the deaf and dumb, groan so deeply; for, considering the number of evils to which the use of the tongue and ears are liable, without doubt he had regard to the dangerous nature of the benefit which he was going to confer. How can those who have an upright heart be put to death, according to what is said in the Psalm*? "It is by scandal," adds Origen, "and by relating it. A man enters into the Church of Jesus Christ with all the simplicity of innocence, and the desire of affecting his salvation; but if this new brother should remark, either in the actions or words of those who are more ancient than himself in the faith, anything in formal opposition to the faith, or if he should hear it remarked by others, soon his weakness gives way to this scandal; he falls, and his fall is the work of those who gave and published this scandal; and when fallen, he is truly put to death: all principle of life escapes from his soul; it is dead; and his blood will fall upon those who have shed it†. How deeply this sin was considered in the middle ages, may be learned from the discourse of S. Bernard, upon what he styles the execrable lust of detraction, and of hearing detraction. "Remark," he says, "how easily the swiftly running word can infect a great multitude of souls with the stain of this malice. The feet of such men are swift to shed blood, as swift as the word flies. It is one individual who speaks, and only to one person, and yet that one word, in a moment, will slay innumerable souls. You may see some emitting only deep sighs, and this with gravity, and with a sad countenance, uttering malediction; so much the more plausible, as it seems to proceed unwillingly, and from a sympathising, condoling heart. I grieve, he will say, for I love him much;—and another, I knew it well, and would never disclose it, but since others have published it abroad, I cannot deny the fact. I say it in sorrow, but it is too true. A great misfortune, truly, it is; for he can act so well, and do so much good in other respects." "Detractors are hateful to God," saith the Apostle; "and it is not wonderful, since that vice is especially opposed to charity, which is God‡." Scandal, which thus inflicts death on the souls of men,

* Ps. xxxvi. 14. † Origen. Hom. on Ps. iii.
‡ S. Bernardi in Cantica, Serm. xxiv.

flies with the rapidity of winged arrows; and Plutarch might refer to this, in alluding to the Homeric expression, "Επεα πτερόεντα." "Wondrous, truly, and pitiable it is," says Richard of St. Victor, "that such a noble creature, made in the image of God, and preferred above all his works, at a slight word, a whisper, a stroke of the air, should be violently bent from the state of its rectitude, and afterwards driven about, hither and thither, as in a whirlwind *." Even independent of the eternal woe, these writers remark, that the temporal injury inflicted by detraction is beyond estimation, and that the hearer suffers equally with the speaker; for by destroying our love and reverence for other men, he deprives us of one of the chief intellectual pleasures reserved for our nature. "The demons urge us," says St. John Climachus, "either to sin, or to judge those who sin †;" and that, too, without being, perhaps, aware of our own guilt; for, as Cardan remarks, "Loquacem qui fateatur, neminem invenias: qui lapsus sit verbo, infinitos ‡." Interrogate each of these uncharitable speakers, and you will understand how truly said Truth, "Et cœperunt simul omnes excusare." Drexelius wrote an admirable book on the vices of the tongue, against which men were assiduously warned by teachers of the middle ages. "Those who speak evil of others are excluded from the kingdom of God, according to the Apostle §;" and what shall we say, then, of those who call their neighbour wicked, envious, rash, proud? This is the remark of St. Chrysostom in his treatise on compunction, addressed to Demetrius ||. "It is the moment of a feast, too," say these writers, "which is generally selected; it is then that we imitate the wicked man, that sat and spake against his brother; not like David, who said, 'in transitu,' all men are liars, but who sat, a sad, solemn, premeditate, and deliberate posture, that his malice might have a full blow."

Reader, we are not precisely entering upon ground already explored on a former occasion. It is true, we observed that the tone of intercourse in all societies which are not Catholic, wants meekness: but what we have to remark here is, that it wants mercy. The acute

* De statu interioris hominis, lib. i. c. 9.
† Grad. x.
‡ Prudent. civilis, cap. 84.
§ 1 Cor. vi.
|| Lib. i. cap. 2.

and frank Cardan makes a strange confession. "Among my vices," saith he, "I acknowledge one great and singular, that I never say anything more willingly than what will displease the hearers; and in this I persevere, knowingly and willingly, though I am not ignorant how many enemies this alone gains for me, such is the force of nature, joined to long custom *!" Great, he might well term it, but excepting among a people of faith, far from singular vice; for it is so essentially a disposition of our fallen nature, that nothing but the supernatural influence of Catholicism can effect a complete cure. When that has not been applied, every one,—the schoolboy,—the collegian,—the senator,—the man of drawing-rooms,—the lounger in public places,—the young and old,—the noble and plebeian,—all are Cardans in that respect, and might truly make the same confession, if they had his honesty. Are you about to visit a country where Luther, or Calvin, or Cranmer, or Jewell, are the names in most repute? where there is no such thing heard of by youth or age as confession?—that is, in short, where the mysteries and light of faith have been removed with the discipline of Rome? Then learn to stand constantly on your guard against malice, and the shrewdness of ill-natured criticism, and the spirit which triumphs in humiliating others, and in spoiling, by one cunningly-devised blow, their day or hour of festivity. Lay aside the feeling of innocent freedom with which you had been accustomed to conduct yourself in those Catholic lands, where men were taught, from boyhood, in the words of St. Antony, "that there was no greater impiety than causing grief of any kind to others†;" where every one, young and old, rich and poor, looked and spoke as if he joyed in kindness, and were so averse to whatever could interrupt it, that, as we read of Andrew Doria, he would desist from supporting his own cause, though convinced of its justice, rather than seem to seek praise by an obstinate disputation‡. You are now with men of a different type, who have revived the old civilization. The spirited and burning retort is here thought, not merely by the openly profane, but by the grave and formal, too, as character-

* Hieron. Cardan. de Vita propria, cap. 13.
† Serm. S. Antonii.
‡ Sigonii de Reb. Gest. And. Doriæ, lib. ii.

istic of a noble nature, and every one is ready to reply, in the style of Plautus, to the unintentional offender, "Tu contumeliam alteri facias; tibi non dicatur? Tam ego homo sum quam tu." Here you will find, as occurrences of every day, such scenes as those you read about, more proper for a tragedy than a history, which once seemed rare and matchless, as at Padua, when the house of Limina, which had been ennobled by many saints, beheld the mutual slaughter of two brothers, arising not from premeditated wickedness, but from a jest; the one wishing he had as many oxen as the stars that were then shining over their heads, as they walked in the court of their palace, and the other replying, that he wished his lands were as wide as that field of sky, and asking then "where should they feed?"—hearing, instantly, "on your lands;" and then exclaiming, "without my consent?" and when "even so," was the rejoinder, neither yielding to the other, both drawing their swords, and incurring death *. Even where such deeds follow not, there is still a secret, and in heart most merciless, war maintained: all is hollow beneath your feet. These smiles and salutations are like those of the third Henry, of whom the Italian poet said,

"Si cui dixit, Ave, fuit hoc ut ab hoste cavendum."

In spirit, if not in deeds, it is again an all-hating world. Neither genius nor experience has compensated for the loss of the charity of faith: they have only formed the character which the poet describes:—

"The pride, but not the fire of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise,
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound."

The remedy which secured human life from these wounds in ages of faith, was wholly indeed derived from a divine source; but it is no less true, that many practices were instituted expressly to guard against them. The horror which such dispositions excited during the

* Bern. Scand. de Antiq. Pat. lib. iii. 13.

middle ages, gave rise even to certain customs, which have often been remarked as belonging to feudal manners. It is curious to find men, merely from observing that six guests could change their relative positions at table seven hundred times, leading themselves and others to reflect how many permutations of evil by the tongue might occur during the time *. The sophist, in Plato, maintains, that it was owing to the want of ability in conversation, that the custom arose with barbarous people of having music and poetry at their banquets; "for they hire," said he, "foreign sounds at a great price; but wherever the men that he admires, καλοὶ κἀγαθοὶ, met to feast in company, one never saw these players on flutes, or poets, but they were sufficient," he observes, "to entertain each other with their own voices, saying and hearing things decorously, κἂν πάνυ πολὺν οἶνον πίωσιν †." We need not at present go back to the days of Plato in search of persons who are as competent as these Athenians to entertain each other with their own voices, where there is no knowledge or remembrance of the judgment that awaiteth every idle, and consequently every suspicious, critical, detracting, calumnious, uncharitable word: but, as during ages of faith, the sense of this future day of reckoning excluded an extensive category of topics, it was found advisable, on many occasions, to return to the discipline of the barbarians, though, no doubt, from widely different motives, and to ordain that sacred readings or music should be a constant attendant on the banquet. Besides this, it was common, not alone in monasteries and bishops' houses, but in castles and secular dwellings, to inscribe lines, deprecating a breach of charity, over the table at which the guests were seated. Thus Sfondrati, the cardinal abbot of St. Gall, so late as in the seventeenth century, caused to be written on the walls of his dining-room the words which had been inscribed by St. Augustin over his own table:—

> "Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere famam,
> Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi ‡."

We have had occasion, repeatedly, in the preceding

* Drexelii de Universis Vitiis Linguæ, cap. 41.
† Plat. Protagoras.
‡ Ildefon. von Arx. Geschichte des S. Gall. iii.

books, to notice the solicitude of persons in the middle ages, like the mother of Guibert de Nogent, to profit by the warning of ascetic guides, and to refrain from criticising the character of the absent. Those moralists allowed of no distinctions, but said, broadly, from the beginning, with Thomas à Kempis, "You will never be devout, and one of the interior life, unless you resolve to be silent respecting others, and attentive only to yourself." The angelic women, who profited by these lessons, in themselves secure of censure, yet at bare report of others' failing, shrinked with maiden fear; and they who heard of profanation, or abuse of holy things, were able, merely by their altered hue and looks of pity, to put to silence the intemperate speaker. It is, in truth, most curious, from the details in the ancient books, to trace the operation of charity in the conversational intercourse of life during the middle ages. Sir Thomas More, whenever he heard detraction or criticism of the absent, used to interrupt the conversation, saying, "Let every one declare his opinion, but I affirm this house to be well built;" and thus he either corrected or disturbed the calumniator *. He had well meditated on the text which induced St. Bernard to say, "whether to detract, or to hear a detractor, be more damnable, I cannot easily determine †." "I always had this thought present with me," says St. Theresa, "that I was never to wish nor to say anything of any creature, that I would not have them say of me. Hence, it was generally understood, that wherever I chanced to be, all absent persons were safe." Thanks to the charity inspired by the Catholic religion, in no modern language was there even a word to express that practice which Pericles ascribes to the Lacedæmonians; *τὴν πρὸς ἀλλήλους τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπιτηδευμάτων ὑποψίαν*—that daily malicious and suspicious scrutiny of the actions of one another in private ‡. The roots of mercy and indulgence lay very deep in the minds of men: witness the act of that brother Bernard, a monk of the Cistercian order, who hung up in his cell a picture of a profligate libertine, and wrote under it, "The portrait of Brother Bernard;" and who replied to the father

* Drex. de Univ. Linguæ, cap. 18.
† De Consideratione, lib. ii. c. 13.
‡ Thucydid. lib. ii. c. 37.

master of the novices, who asked him how he came to give himself such a character, that it was from his conviction, that if the grace of God had not preserved him, he would have committed all the crimes of this person, having in himself the source and principle of them all *. "From vices in every manner he fled," says the ancient chronicle of Ansigisus, abbot of Fontanelle; "but of other men he was neither a morose censor, nor a curious investigator †." The care with which men of blessed mercy avoided charging others with any fault, is very conspicuous in the old literature. St. Bernard, having written to Peter the Venerable, complaining that he had not replied to his letters, the latter excuses himself, saying, "The cause of delay arose from the bearer, who, not finding me at Cluny, though I was not far off, being only at Marciniac, neglected to bear or send them to me; but lest I should seem to accuse a good man, I believe that he was either prevented by some business, or afraid to attempt the journey, in consequence of the extreme severity of the weather at that time; for I was detained myself during a month by the snow ‡." I cite instances from the cloister, because the monastic type, in respect to charity, was that which directed manners in all societies of the epoch, that sought to merit the character of Christian; and I cannot let this occasion pass, without observing, that it is this spirit, perhaps more than anything else, which distinguished Catholic manners from those which prevailed in countries that have abandoned the unity of faith. Other travellers, after visiting Italy, may describe her rich and majestic cities, her beautiful villas, her odoriferous shores, her enchanting lakes; may describe the enthusiasm of her people for the arts, and their inexhaustible provision for all that can ennoble and adorn the human existence; I will commemorate only the charity which reigns there. This was the great novel and distinctive phenomenon of a moral order which attracted my attention. Many English travellers in Spain and Portugal have represented a similar observation, as the most grateful result of their travels. In fact, nothing

* Relations de la mort de quelques Religieux de la Trappe, tom. ii. 189.

† Chronicon Fontanellense apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iii.

‡ Epist. ccxxix.

can be more striking: it comes gradually before you, but in the end, it leaves an impression indelible. Now this spirit of private society, in such countries, cannot, consistently with an accurate observation of facts, be ascribed to their geographical position, according to the suggestion of certain celebrated writers, who seem to regard all amiable dispositions as inseparable from a southern latitude. No. Such language, however it may pass with some for philosophical, is nothing but sheer absurdity. It is not climate, or nature, which has formed this master of a family, this mother, these sons and daughters, these devout and joyous families, every member of which is so loving and so humble, while surrounded, perhaps, with riches, and having, at the command of their imagination, a thousand associations, the least of which would be sufficient to fill the breasts of others with an ineffable pride, and to dictate expressions of a truly insane arrogance. It is faith, grace divine, which has made them; it is the charity of Jesus Christ which has produced this supernatural society, in which men of all degrees are found, as St. Augustine says, serving the Lord in gladness; "not in the bitterness of murmuring and of judging, but in the sweetness of love *."

We before had occasion to remark the influence of poverty of spirit upon the writers of the middle ages; and to what interesting conclusions might we come, if we were to inquire what was the influence of charity upon literature? Alas! these men of blessed mercy almost esteemed it dangerous presumption to record the virtues of the just: what would they have thought of criticising and condemning them? "To us, sitting in the narrow corner of a cell," says St. Peter Damian, in the prologue to his life of St. Romuald, "it seemed more useful to recall assiduously to the eyes of the mind our own sins, rather than compose the history of other men's virtues: it was more expedient to weep for the darkness of faults committed, than to render obscure, with unskilful words, the splendid deeds of sanctity." This was according to St. Bernard's wish; "God grant that I may enjoy peace of soul, the sweetness and repose of a good conscience, the spirit of mercy, simplicity and charity towards my neighbour, the gift of rejoicing with those that

* Tractat. in Ps. xcix.

rejoice, and of weeping with those that weep; and I desire nothing else. All the rest I leave to the Apostles, and to men truly apostolical: the tops of the mountains serve for a retreat to stags, but the holes of the rocks to hedgehogs *." Walafrid Strabo apologises for the warm and indignant language used by Theganus, when describing the ingratitude and baseness of the ministers, who had been slaves before they were raised to the highest offices by the emperor Louis the Pious, against whom they so impiously rebelled, and remarks, that it must be ascribed to his affection for that emperor, to his excessive love for justice, and to the force of his natural zeal; being of noble birth, and having a most ardent mind, which was exasperated at beholding the insolence of men against the indulgent master, who had raised them from a servile state to honours †. The monk asks indulgence for the man born to arms, and the office of nobility. The words of St. Gregory, in his reply to Felix, a Sicilian bishop, had been a law to society during ages of faith. "Let no clerk or layman rashly reprehend bishops or superiors, even though he should see them act in a manner reprehensible. The deeds of bishops, however deserving of censure, are not to be struck with the sword of the tongue, lest, whilst convincing them of evil, other men, by a consequent impulse of pride, should be precipitated into the abyss." At the same time, there is nothing more striking in the manners of the middle ages than the diligence with which all abuse of authority was provided against, the severity with which vices were denounced by holy men, and the docility with which such correction was received. The tenth sermon of Ælred ‡, addressed to the monks of Rievaulx, contains the most severe reproof of the manners of monks at that time, and it ends with these words, "video vos adhuc ad plura audienda avidos, sed parcite jam prolixo sermone fatigato."

No class of society, in our times, would tolerate a writer, who should attempt to expose its defects with the freedom which was then regarded as not only excusable, but laudable. In fact, every one knew that charity was

* Serm. xlviii. sup. Cant.
† Thegani de Gestis Ludovic. Pii, Præfat.
‡ On Isaiah xiii.

evinced more in admonitions, and even reproof, than in panegyric. The secular clergy of the twelfth century beheld themselves attacked, in the most unsparing terms, by Alanus de Insulis. If only the thousandth part of what he alleges were to be published by an ecclesiastic of our days, he would be inevitably set down as a dangerous and most suspicious character. What a contrast to ages of faith! This clergy of the twelfth century, so far from turning upon the author who thus treated them, conferred on him, by general consent, the title of Universal Doctor. It is true, there was no possibility of mistaking the motive of the ancient monitors, whose rule had always been conformable to the golden words of Melchior Canus:—"I spare names," says that Spanish theologian, "since the judgment of this place is concerning manners also, and not erudition alone, in which censure may be more free; for as to manners, censure ought certainly to be more cautious in regard to the living, and more reverential with relation to the dead*." When obliged to speak of the public guilt of individuals, that could not be concealed, these ancient writers testify their sorrow, and some degree of fear, at the very moment of recording it. "There was in my monastery, which is in Asia," says St. John Climachus, "a certain old man, most negligent, and little moderate, which I say, not for the sake of judging, but studying truth†." "Geraldus de Calcidia decreed himself to be abbot," says the monastic historian of one house.—"Hic male administravit monasterium. Pudor est ejus acta recensere‡." The chronicler of St. Richarius hurries over the crimes of an evil abbot, and concludes thus:—"But it is enough to indicate the unhappiness of this man, that posterity may know how to avoid his example. Let us speak of what good he did, if he did any.—Dicamus de bono, si quid fecit.—He began to repair the tower of St. Saviour, which was in ruins; and by the alms of the faithful, the Church itself was restored. However, it was at length necessary to depose him, after an appeal to Rome. He died shortly afterwards.

Ultio non sit ei, maneat sed lux requiei. Amen§."

* De locis Theolog. lib. xi. c. 6. † Grad. iv.

‡ Chronicon Auriliacensis Abbat. Mabil. Vet. Analect. 350.

§ Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Richarii cap. 36. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

The great scholastic philosophers evince the same spirit as the humble chronicler. Gilles of Colonna, when disapproving of any opinion of any doctor, only says, that he does not understand that sentence; and the doctor himself, without naming, he styles a great and illustrious man. Melchior Canus boils over with indignation against the golden legend, without naming the great prelate who compiled it; and in a later age, Touron chastises Fleury by remarking, that the late historian, who can see nothing great in Albert but the number and dimensions of his volumes, had probably seen nothing but their number and dimensions *. Abeillard held in the utmost horror the opinions of Roscellin; but as he had formerly learned from him the principles of dialectics, he could not bring himself to write against his old master, when urged to do so, but satisfied his zeal for religion by combating his errors without naming him in his work, entitled Introduction to Theology.

In adhering to the spirit of the blessed merciful, the writers of the middle ages were only in harmony with the readers whom they addressed. Many of them, therefore, prefix to their volumes those beautiful words of St. Gregory.—"Nor are there wanting little ones who may be instructed by my sayings, nor great who can show mercy to my known infirmity. To the one I have spoken, explaining what they should do; to the others I open myself, confessing what may excite their pity. I have not withheld the medicine of words from the former, nor have I concealed from the latter the laceration of wounds. I pray, therefore, every one who reads this book to grant me the consolation of his prayers to the strict Judge; and what he shall discover sordid in me, to wash out with tears." Such were, in general, the readers and critics whom these ancient authors had to encounter; men who would, if possible, have washed out the defects of whatever book they read with their tears.

These examples may excite surprise, from being so little in harmony with the spirit and practice of the modern civilization; but when we proceed to hear the instructions which were given continually to men in ages of faith, such astonishment will probably cease, and we shall only admire the consistency of the Catholic society,

* Vie de S. Thom. d'Aq.

in making its practice conformable to its belief. As charity was known to be the vital principle of religion, whatever indicated its decay was understood as an index of spiritual death, and denounced accordingly. Hear St. Bernard:—"Beware, lest you become either a curious investigator, or a rash judge of another's conversation;" and St. Bonaventura says, "Even if I should commit an act that you might condemn, judge not your neighbour; but rather excuse the intention, if you cannot the work: think it ignorance; think it involuntary; think it accidental; but if the certainty of the thing should render all dissimulation impossible, say to yourself, it was a vehement temptation; what would have become of me, if I had been similarly tried?" and in this manner, St. Bernard shows how "they that are spiritual derive gain from everything, even from their own and others' sins, and from things hurtful, and from the operations of the devil *."

To excuse oneself and believe oneself always innocent, and to accuse others as the cause of evils, was a disposition deemed so unhappy in the middle ages, that it was thought to be precisely the very sin to which the beatitude of the merciful was opposed. St. Bernard, showing that there are eight vices to correspond with the eight beatitudes, all of which were included in the sin of our first parents, remarks that the fifth is especially directed against that sin of Adam when he sought to throw his own guilt upon his wife, saying, "Mulier, quam dedisti mihi sociam, dedit mihi de ligno et comedi †:" from which men were warned by subtle words inscribed even upon tombs, as on the ancient sepulchre of Bovetinus the Mantuan in the cathedral of Padua, on which this line occurs:—

"Quam sibi plus aliis vigilans pietatis alumnus."

"There are persons," says Guy de Roye, "who can never hear the absent praised without insinuating, through envy, that they have some defect or other. This sin is so pernicious, that one can hardly pass from it to a good repentance; for it is against the Holy Ghost, who is the fountain of all good, and God saith that for

* Meditat. vitæ Christi, cap. 43. † Serm. lxvi.

this sin there will be no mercy in this world nor in the next *"

"Never speak evil of others," says Louis of Blois, "and do not even consent by silence to the calumnies of other men; but if you can with prudence interrupt the conversation, after the example of that holy man who said to those who accused some absent person, 'If we are not such as you describe, we ought to return thanks to God †.'" "Above all things," says St. Augustin, "take care lest you admit any suspicions into your mind, because they are the poison of friendship ‡." St. Bonaventura calls them a secret plague, which drives God far from us, and tears in pieces fraternal charity §.

Totila, King of the Goths, on entering a certain city and being met by the bishop Cassianus, remarked that the countenance of this prelate was red, and thence judged that he was a drinker, whereas he was a holy austere man. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvais' Mirror, who alludes to this, has collected many examples to deter men from the vice of rash judgment ||, though the skill which enabled St. Gregory Nazianzen to detect the latent serpent in the breast of Julian before his apostacy—skill which he whose proverbs holy Church hath canonized—attributes to the prudent, and even that science which Gall and Spurzheim have revived, were not wanting in the middle ages; for of the former we find trace when Octo the jurisconsult, and father of Nicholeno the archbishop of Amalphi, is related by Marsilius Ficinus to have predicted from the countenance of his son, when a boy, that he would be a man great in religion; Leander Albertus also ascribing it to Gambarus, a sculptor and canon of St. Petronio, whom he adduces among other illustrious men to prove that Bologna had citizens who were not ignorant of that science; and of the existence of the latter, without referring to John Sanguinacio amongst the ambiguous doctors of Padua, we have evidence in a treatise composed by a Franciscan friar in the thirteenth century; yet the abuse of such researches was evidently guarded against with

* Le Doctrinal de Sapience.
† Instit. Spirit. cap. ii. 2. ‡ Lib. de Amicit. c. 24.
§ Stimul. Divini Amoris, cap. 10.
|| Speculum Moral. lib. i. p. 4.

the greatest care. In fact, theology supplied men with a corrective, by means of which, without danger of any breach of charity, they could pursue those curious investigations which were made after the example of Aristotle, by Albert the Great, in his first book on animals; by Jerome Manfred of Bologna, in his treatise on physiognomy; by Michael Savonarola of Padua, ancestor of the great Jerome, in his Speculum Physionomiæ; by Antonius Cermisonus, an illustrious physician, as ancient writers say; by Bartholomew Cocles of Bologna, styled a surgeon and distiller of medicines, in his Anastasis of Physiognomy, addressed to the most illustrious Lord Alexander Bentivoglio; and by Michael Scot. Guilielmus, a commentator on Aristotle's Physiognomy, quotes Galen, who observes that the bodies of animals are the instruments of the souls which are in them; and that as diverse animals have different affections, so have they members diversely disposed to follow these affections. Bartholomew Cocles therefore argues, that as men have different moral dispositions, so have they bodies rendered conformable to these different dispositions. Passions, he says, cannot be indulged without causing a physical alteration, which is betrayed by signs. The soul, in wondrous sort received in plastic mould, brings with her both the human and divine; while the material features assume that form which influence of the mind imprints upon them; and as the air, when saturate with showers, the casual beam refracting, decks itself with many a hue, so here, the new form on the spirit, follows still. St. Augustin supposed that the dispositions of men, and even their unuttered thoughts, might be learned from certain signs imparted to the body by the mind *. And St. Thomas remarks that the interior affections can be sometimes discovered from the countenance or the pulse †. Hence, as in the sciences, where men proceed not only à priori, or from the knowledge of causes to the knowledge of effects, but also conversely, à posteriori, from the knowledge of effects to the knowledge of causes, "so from the disposition of bodies," says Cocles, "it may be reasonably argued, à posteriori, concerning manners and disposition of mind."

Will you credit Michael Scot, and listen awhile to

* De Divinat. Dæmon. c. 5. † Sum. 9. 57, a. 4.

things that sound alien to the ordinary matter of our pages, attracted by the kind of occult power which old Romance attaches to that name? This deep investigator of nature's secrets will tell you that a small head has naturally a small brain; that if you can determine the complexion of the brain, which is indicated by the hair and by the skin, you may conjecture with probability the internal dispositions; that a high round forehead indicates a man liberal to his friends, of good understanding, tractable, and of many graces; that a flat smooth forehead argues a man litigious, vain, deceitful; a forehead too small in all parts, a foolish man, prone to anger and cruelty, a courtier, and fond of elegance; a forehead round in the angles of the temples, void of hair, a good and clever man, courageous, magnanimous, loving beauty and honour; a forehead pointed in the same parts as if bones projected, a vain, unstable, weak, and simple man; a forehead inflated as if with flesh, and full cheeks, a man irascible, proud, and of gross mind. Every member, he will assure you, has thus its signification. Thick lips denote small wisdom, and credulity; slender and drawn-in lips a man discreet in all things, secret, sagacious, and of much genius; unequal lips, a man of gross mind, slow intelligence, and of varied fortune; a chin upturned and sharp, with a hollowness in juncture of the lips, a bad, bold, proud, and envious man; a large round head, a man secret, sagacious in action, ingenious, discreet, of great imagination, laborious, stable, and a legist; a long head and unprepossessing face, a foolish, malicious, credulous, and envious man; a voluble head that moves here and there, a foolish, simple, vain, false, presumptuous man; a large head with a wide face, a man suspicious, secret, bold, and immodest. Again, he will desire you to believe that the soft, long, and slender hand signifies a man of good understanding, timid, pacific, a legist, and discreet, apt to service, domestic, and learned; the short and thick hand a man of gross mind, vain, lying, irascible, laborious; the hand which is stiff towards the end of the fingers, a man tenacious, cupidinous, thoughtful, hard to manage, and not easily brought to believe what he hears; that the slow long step indicates a bad memory, a gross mind, a confused intelligence, idle, and incredulous; the quick short step, a weak man, hasty in action and imagination; the long

and unsteady gait, not holding the straight way, a foolish gross man, sagacious in evil, like the wolf; needless quick movement of the members while speaking, sitting, or standing, a foul, immodest, indiscreet, evil-mouthed, vain, unstable, lying, faithless man *.

Reader, you have heard the wizard; and that such observations of themselves must be always dangerous, no one can doubt; though he, perhaps, of feature prominent, as Dante styles Charles, brother of St. Louis, might deem the science useful which bids him beware lest he be a man "valde minus scientem quam se scire reputet:" for to that peril Michael Scot declares such a configuration subjects him. But in justice to this subtle author, one should note the caution given in the very title-page, which says, "Scientia ejus est multum tenenda in secreto:" and also his concluding admonition to be very cautious lest you should judge any one precipitately from any one member, without attending to the result of all observations of the whole body taken together, and carefully separating from them what may be the mere result of accident or of disease. "No man," saith he, "is to be judged by the sign of one member, for one may counteract another. Therefore with discretion these chapters are to be investigated; and thus with great industry one may form one's judgment without error, if it pleaseth God." Finally, you have the theological corrective in his doctrinal note; for it saith, "When you see a humble man of red hair, faithful and tall, wise and fat, quick with leanness and simple, handsome, not vain, poor, not envious, of white complexion and wise, upright, and not audacious or cruel, hairy, and not luxurious, having a wandering dissipated eye, and not deceitful, lying, or vain, render special thanks to God alone and to his mother, for there is the operation divine." Thus, as I remarked in the beginning, the doctrines of faith preserved men in the slippery and darksome path of these inquiries, and saved them from the heavy and ridiculous falls to which they might otherwise have been exposed. Accordingly, Bartholomew Cocles, who calls physiognomy the royal science, begins his book, which he styles the Resurrection of Physiognomy, a science which, from being long dead, he has

* Michael Scot, lib. Physionomiæ.

recalled to life, with the assistance of an infinite number of authors, by demonstrating quod anima sequitur corporalem complexionem: et quod prudentia nostra evitare fata possumus. And lest these should seem contradictory propositions, he shows that man by reason even can counteract the influence of the body; and that no one can prognosticate with certainty, but only in the way of conjecture; and he concludes with these words, which seem to contain the secret for conducting all future investigations of such physical phenomena in union with charity and faith:—"It appears, therefore, that the corporal signs of physiognomy induce a great probability respecting the natural manners of men, although not a necessity; for man can conquer the dispositions of his nature, as did Socrates. Note that all these signs induce a great inclination, which it is difficult to obviate, although possible, as theologians also teach us—quare concludemus voluntatem nostram sub nostræ potestatis imperio esse subjectam *."

I cannot refrain from remarking, in conclusion, how well it would have been for many philosophers of later times, disciples of the reformed theology, if, while proposing their observations or their theories to the world, they had borrowed a sentence or two from these strange books on the infinite secrets of nature, like this that was composed in the cell of a distiller of medicines in the middle age. Their investigations might then have been pursued without contradicting the reason of all past times, and, above all, without diminishing charity, without opening fresh fountains of bitterness, to fill with suspicion, and perhaps aversion, minds that would have been otherwise, with all the joyous and generous confidence of youth, cloudless and serene.

But now, leaving Michael Scot and Cocles of Bologna, let us return to the more lightsome path of moral teaching and historic proof.

Pope Pius V. is recorded to have extended the principle of resisting suspicions to the judicial administration, so that he would not attend to any informer. Two men had assured the lieutenant of his guard that they had been solicited and bribed by Cardinal Moron to

* Magistri Bartholomei Coclitis Bonon. Physionomisti Anastasis, lib. i. cap. 1.

assassinate the Pope. They offered such plausible evidence, that this officer believed their report, and went instantly to apprize the Pontiff; but he, instead of ordering the cardinal to be arrested, sent for him into his private chamber, and then told him what he had heard, and declared that he did not believe him to be capable of committing any crime. His confidence was proved to be well founded, and the true conspirators paid the penalty. The common voice of the whole monastic host from the time of St. Antony, declares it preferable to dwell with a blasphemer and a tyrant, than with a whisperer*. Yet the moral teachers of the ages of faith went even farther than to forbid suspicions. "Judge not, and despise not even any public sinner," saith St. Bonaventura, "for you know not his end; and God is powerful to justify the impious and malignant†."

Memorable was the saying of Cassien, that "it is the evident index of a mind not yet purified from vice, to regard the crimes of other men without compassion, and to pass upon them the rigid censure of a judge‡." "Condemn not any mortal," said the blessed father of the desert, "lest God should execrate thy prayers §."

"Never judge rashly the sayings or actions of others," says Louis of Blois, "and you will not implicate yourself in superfluous cares; and beware how you utter or hear words of detraction. For this purpose do not pay attention to the less composed manners and deeds of others, unless compelled by the necessity of your office; for he who is curious in such matters will grow suspicious and unquiet, sour, and easily moved to anger, and while unseasonably occupied about others will forget himself. We must not immediately conclude that no men are good in a place where many are seen to live ill, nor imagine that all those are irremediably lost who are known hitherto to have led a sinful life, nor suppose that an orthodox and pious man is despised and not loved by God because he is as yet detained by some imperfections. We must not admit sinistrous suspicions, or suffer them to insinuate themselves into our heart, we must not believe easily evil of others, but think well of them, and interpret in the best sense all their works and words, as

* Sermones S. Ant. ab. x.
† Stim. div. am. c. 4.
‡ Coll. xi. 10.
§ S. Anton. Serm.

far as possible; and if any one has grievously sinned, a man of charity will pity him, remembering the infirmity of human nature, and the envy and malice of the devil." "He must despair of no man's conversion, but love and regard with joy all Christians as his brethren, called with him to the same celestial inheritance; and he must not attend to the vileness of the visible body in men, but to the excellent nobility and beauty of the invisible soul, for which the King of kings and Lord of lords, the only Son of God, wished to take flesh and to suffer, and to shed his blood and to die. Vehemently let him grieve that such unspeakable generosity and beauty should be degraded by negligence and polluted by sins. Let him pity, then, with the most inward commiseration all who live ill, all who are in a state of blindness, as well Christians of the right faith, as also heretics, schismatics, and Gentiles; and let him hope for the salvation of them all with true charity *."

In the houses where religious perfection was professed, men were to overlook evil; and how could they then imagine themselves permitted to judge and condemn it in the world? "Beware how you think or speak concerning the disposition or conversation of other monks," says the blessed John of the Cross. "Whatever you may see, whatever you may hear, be not scandalized, be not astonished, but efface all that from your mind, in order that you may preserve your soul in purity and peace; for although you were to live among angels, you would judge that many things are not good, from your not knowing what was at the bottom of them. Remember the example of Lot's wife: terrified at the ruins of Sodom, she turned to see what passed there, and God, to punish her curiosity, changed her into a pillar of salt. Let that teach you that even if you should live among demons, God does not wish that you should make these turns and reflections upon their actions, since it is not your affair to take cognizance of them †." "Charity," says St. Augustin, "believes well of evil. It is pernicious when any one thinks evil of what is perchance good, through ignorance of what it is. Suppose it be evil,

* Ludovic. Blosius, Enchirid. Parvulorum, lib. i. Doc. x. Append.

† Precautions against the World.

what do I lose by believing that it is good? What does heresy advise? It condemns the unknown; it condemns the whole world *." "Return to your cell and pray," was the advice which Luther received from his confessor when he disclosed his thoughts to him. He was at the point of division whence the two roads separate. Doubtless the temptation for every man is vehement at some period or other of his life, to choose, like him, the broad and beaten way of judging; but in ages of faith there were not wanting benevolent hands to raise a cross or a signal wherever there could be a doubt as to the direction, in order to intimate that the poor little narrow path of not judging was more secure, and even more agreeable to nature, after the first difficulty was surmounted; and, in fact, it quickly led those who followed it into a secret paradise; for the mind, independent of the religious recompence, soon experienced far higher pleasure in rooting out the base suspicions and judgments which rose up in it from time to time against charity, than it had ever derived from nourishing and training them to the maturity of fruit of words and deeds. It found by experience that, as the great St. Antony says, to be a lover of men was, in fact, to live †. The discovery or invention, therefore, of a good intention in acts that might have seemed injurious, imparted to it the joy of a conqueror; and to those who would have counselled deeds of deep revenge, it only answered, like that ancient king benign and meek, with visage undisturbed, "How shall we those requite who wish us evil, if we thus condemn the man that loves us?" In short, charity became an art, and was cultivated with the same delight as attends the exercise of any other art. Hence it was that men were so slow to discover scandals, or to exaggerate offences. They did not look with scowling eyes at things which cause only mirth in heaven; they contemplated nature not as Manichæans; they loved God not with the dark narrow views of those in later times, who followed the sophist of Geneva, but as Catholics: that is, they loved the just Creator and merciful Redeemer, and therefore they loved all his creatures. They loved men as men, and men as Christians. Imitators of God, other Christs, they loved even those who seemed forgetful of their

* Tractat. in Ps. cxlvii. † Serm. S. Ant.

Lord; for he, from the depths of love's abyss, loves even those who love him not, loves them even contaminated and deformed—not, indeed, to make them continue in that state, but to render them beautiful*."

"Why, O man," asks Marsilius Ficinus, "do you vituperate the world? The world is most beautiful, framed by the best and most perfect reason, though to you, indeed, it may be unclean and evil, because you are unclean and evil in a good world†." They considered, notwithstanding all the abuses that existed, how much generosity, how much justice, how much fear, how much love, dominates in the life of men; they marked the exquisite beauty and charm of the universal order, from the sports of joyous youth upon the meadow on a summer's day, to the tranquil meditation of the aged between cloistered walls faintly illumined by the dull lancet pane. Charity looked with the eyes of a painter at the different pursuits and characters of men, and apprehending thus drew a profit from all things that it saw. The expression of angel mildness in the little sister who hastens with her picture of the Madonna to place it in her brother's boat before his departure, did not please it more than the fierce disdain of art observed in the rough figure of that brother, son of one of those Christian fishermen, as old Albertus calls them, whose youthful countenance, all determined as it was, seemed ever on the point of relaxing into smiles. Charity saw a blessed martyr's spirit evinced in simple and low things; it saw the mind after God's own heart in those who, though trained up thus meanly, were innocent and holy, far beyond the trick of others; it saw constancy, courtesy, friendship, gentleness, all wildly but most sweetly growing in the illiterate children of the laborious poor, whom heretics teach men to regard with the disdain of pedants, or with a still more insulting pity; as if grace could not be theirs, merely perhaps because they put themselves in posture that divine nature hath suited to the words and affections of the generous.

I said that charity was an art, in regard to the pleasure attending its exercise; and the remark is just also in many other respects; for it rendered men, in regard to conversation, like skilful painters, by imparting to them

* Idiotæ Contemp. xix. † Epist. ad Paul. Presbyt.

that delicate tact which feels the necessity of omission as well as of creation—which is evinced in softening down all and covering over some things, casting a shade over objects of sharp brilliancy, and throwing a general, subdued, and gentle tone over the whole surface. Charity was not on the lips' edge alone, but in the heart of men who continued faithful to the Church, and therefore no one feared malicious scrutiny within the dwelling of his neighbour. None there distrusted kindness, though not promised with an oath; for the will to bless could only fail through want of power—such mercy was in human breasts. You find this remarked incidentally by many of the ancient local historians. What a delightful picture does Ambrose Leo present of the state of society in his native city in the fifteenth century? "In such harmony and friendship are the people of Nola educated," saith he, "that such things as civil feuds and party contentions are wholly unknown to them. The only combats they behold are the mimic battles of the youth, which take place annually before the beginning of Lent, the noble and plebeian promiscuously joining; and which are terminated ere the setting sun, when all are friends again, relating their exploits to one another, or enduring their defeat with good humour. You will hardly find, elsewhere, so many pairs of friends as at Nola; nor is it only between the inhabitants that friendships abound: they are equally prompt to embrace foreigners; and to this they are inclined, not through any motive of gain, but simply from the joy which they derive from the idea alone and from the friendship *."

Such representations of society abound in the old writings. One ancient author, alluding to the kindness and charity of the people of Amalphi, says that throughout the whole territory one might imagine oneself inhabiting Paradise. It was the spirit of the blessed merciful, widely diffused and presiding over all movements of the social body, which produced that concord in the state, uniting together the vast multitude of institutions and combinations resulting from Catholicism into one system of harmonious variety which seemed so admirable to the attentive observers of former times, that one who deserved

* Ambros. Leo de Nola, lib. i. c. 13, iii. 13, in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

to be ranked amongst them, John Baptist De Grossis, when writing the history of his native city, entitled it Catanense Decachordum * ; as if a narrative of its manners and institutions, its calamities and its triumphs, would sound like the music of a lyre; as if each digression on a particular monastery, or church, or hospital, or confraternity of mercy, might be compared to a chord of that instrument, by the extension or contraction of which the modulation of sound would become sweeter. He strikes these chords, and we hear of the faith and piety of his countrymen—of their ancient Basilicas, in which are shrined the relics of St. Agatha. We hear of their solemn processions on the anniversaries of their martyrs, of the antiquity and beauty of their monasteries, of the sanctity and learning of the holy men within them, of the charity of abbots, of the love shown to the mendicant and all religious orders by seculars, whether priests or laics, and of their services to the poor, of the devout women, the nuns and sisters of blessed charity, of the hermits in the groves adjoining, who had given all their possessions to the poor for the love of God, of the diplomas and gifts of munificent founders, of the confraternities of laics to serve Christ in the persons of the poor, of the hospitals and asylums for the miserable, of the colleges and schools, of the just esteem entertained for ancient families, whose highest nobility is derived from having so long deserved the love and admiration of their country, of the gifts of nature, of the works of art, to which the words of holy Jerome are so applicable, that things revolve in this circle, that men should bear one another's burdens, and that the sweat of the dead should be the delight of the living, of the deep religious feeling with which they loved and defended their country, so well expressed in those lines upon the shrine of the virgin martyr, the patron of their city—"Ubi orta et passa, regressa sum, quia nimis dilexi eam, et qui mecum hanc non amat patriam, quæ mea est, me odit," —and by those inscribed over the city gates—"Noli offendere patriam Agathæ," — the words, it is said, which thrice presented themselves to the eyes of the Emperor Frederick II. in a book of prayer which fell

* Thesaur. Antiq. Italiæ et Siciliæ, tom. x.

into his hands while resolved upon levelling Catana to the ground for its fidelity to the Roman pontiff, and which filled him with such fear that he relinquished his cruel intentions, and withdrew. The chanter proceeds, and we hear of the palace of the senators, where the robed magistrates, the mitred fathers, the steel-clad heroes, and the illustrious citizens, are represented in ancient paintings; we hear of their loyal fidelity to their princes, of the innocent manners of their youth, of the sanctity of their great men, of the solicitude of their pastors, from St. Everius to Martinus de Leon then living, whose charity forms the last tone.

Reader, do you not perceive how easy it was for this minstrel to fulfil what he promised, and how confidently he might predict that his book would resemble the music of a lyre, at one time perhaps causing tears, at another joy, but never awakening jealousy or envy, or other foul passions, or exciting any affections excepting those of a heart that seeks satiety in love? So it is with all such historic representations of a Catholic state during ages of faith: they resemble harps, which you may strike boldly without fearing to conjure up a bad spirit, touch what chord you will. They form, in fact, a most sweet and unearthly symphony, which, whether plaintive or joyous, is always sure to leave the souls of the listeners more tuned to reverence and pity, more loving and devoted—deeper imbued, in short, with the charity of heaven.

CHAPTER III.

True love, that ever shows itself as clear in kindness as loose appetite in wrong, was not a principle confined to the breasts or tongues of those that cherished it. During the ages of faith, it was developed exteriorly in a great

variety of works, and necessarily comprised action, insomuch that with ancient writers we find the term work used as synonymous with charity; of which you have an instance in the advice which Michael Scot gave to the Emperor Frederick II.: "Sis amicus Dei, fide, spe, et opere *." Since, according to the sentence of the wise, the life of man from youth is prone to sin and obnoxious to divers defilements of vice, there are proposed to him, as Pope Innocent says, many works of charity, that where diversity of diseases hath prevailed the remedies for them may be multiplied †.

Love being the universal principle of good, it would be long to describe its effects. The ancient philosopher sought to illustrate this by citing poetry as an example. "Do you not know," saith he, "that poesy is something multiplex?—ἔστι τι πολύ; for it is the cause of every thing that is made; so that all works in every art belong to poesy, and all that thus work are poets; and yet they are not called poets, but have other names; because what we call poetry is something cut off from the whole of poetry, and confined to one part, which consists in music and metre. In like manner, love is the desire of all good and happy things, though men have confined the use of the word to one part only ‡."

You perceive, reader, that nothing can be more in accordance with the voice of theologians than this passage; for, as the universal doctor saith, "charity binds those that are proximate, draws together those that are far asunder, reduces plurality to unity, diversity to identity; this is a concordant dissonance, an united plurality, an accordant dissent, an harmonious variety; this is the tunic of Christ, woven throughout without seam—the tunic of Joseph of many colours §." "Be it known," says an author of the thirteenth century, whose moral mirror has been ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, "that although the mercy of God is one essentially, since that God is one, yet is it multiplex in effect; so that we read, 'Thy mercies are many, O Lord!' and 'Many are his mercies'—truly so many that no one can tell them, quis

* Liber Physionomiæ quæ compilavit magister Michael Scotus, lib. i. Prohem.

† Epist. tom. iii. lib. xvi. 124. ‡ Plat. Conviv.

§ Alani de Insulis Summa de Arte Prædicat. cap. 21.

sapiens et intelliget misericordias Domini * ?" In this respect, Catholic manners were to be multiform and simple, so that truth and beauty were both secured.

"Therefore," says Richard of St. Victor, "you who wish to be always in contemplation know not to be clothed like the mystic queen of virtues, in a garment of variegated colours. One seeks to be assiduous in prayer, without perceiving that charity wishes to be adorned with variety. Whoever is delighted only with one work, however precious, has not the ornament of charity, which is clothed with variety †." In what manner does the charity of the blessed merciful force itself upon an historian's notice? and in connexion with what subjects that fall within his range of inquiry does it pass before him? This is an interesting question, that will lead to results, as far as the middle ages are concerned, widely different from what the majority of readers at present are inclined to suppose; for whoever would study their history with impartiality and erudition, must come eventually to this conclusion—that while, like all other pages in the annals of mankind, it is stained with blood and tears, what is peculiar to it is a supernatural display of mercy. If, when visiting under its guidance tribunals, prisons, and battle-fields, he must be often led to exclaim, with Shakspeare,—

"Here's much to do with hate,"—

he will be constrained, even in the darkest scenes, to add with the same poet,—

"But more with love."

Perfectly to develop this truth, would require more than a volume; but sufficient details will be found in this Seventh Book to show, at least, in what manner this may be done; to expose the prodigious error and injustice of modern opinions respecting Catholic manners; and to convince every impartial reader, that in relation to mercy as well as justice, the men of former times stood pre-eminent amongst the blest.

Here, no doubt, would be a fitting occasion to speak of those immense labours undertaken for the spiritual good

* Vincent. Bellov. Speculum Morale, lib. i. p. iv. 10.

† Richard, S. Vict. in Ps. xliv.

of mankind, in very early times by the Benedictine saints, and in later by the Dominican and Franciscan friars, and by the Jesuits, all heralds and dispensers of the mercy of God, who made the offering of their repose, their health, their liberty, and their lives, in order to preach the gospel to barbarous nations. The subject, however, rather belongs to a different order of observations from that which we are pursuing. In the last Book, moreover, an allusion was made to the missionaries; and in a future volume we must unavoidably meet with them again, when accompanying the peaceful children of St. Benedict through the forests and mountains of the north. I quit this path, therefore, for the present, to follow a way that keeps nearer to the level of ordinary life and manners.

It may be well, perhaps, in the first instance, to remark, that the simple symbolic forms of government, whether monarchical or republican, which prevailed during ages of faith, were more favourable to the development of mercy in public measures, than the complicated oligarchical constitutions, which the ambition of a powerful minority, discarding all supernatural views, has attempted, in later times, to establish in their place, upon interests purely material. An English writer, who had studied the course of affairs around him during the civil wars, and the usurpation of Cromwell, made the observation, that the very constitution of a multitude seems not so inclineable to save as to destroy. "Rulers," he says, "in aristocracies, or popular states, are never seen to forgive." He looked back, probably, to Pagan times, when certainly no one but a Cleon would ever have accused a democracy of being too inclined to change when it was to show mercy *. Many popular governments in the middle ages exhibited a striking contrast to such representations, evincing evangelic mercy to their enemies; but, at all events, the experiment was made during a longer interval, and on a much greater scale, in the monarchies than in the republics of Christendom. How many splendid instances do we find of forbearance and long suffering exercised by sovereigns in the ages of faith, who had heard it proclaimed on all sides, that mercy and truth should guard the king, and that by clemency his

* Thucydid. lib. iii. 37.

throne should be established? How full of mercy was the emperor Lewis the Pious, how slow to anger and quick to forgive, never refusing pardon, whatever might be the provocation! What examples of this in his conduct towards Berca, count of Barcellona, convicted of high treason, as also towards those who followed the party of his son Lothaire, as well as towards a multitude of others! "Tardus ad irascendum, facilis ad miserandum," says Theganus, of this great emperor; and the astronomer, who lived in his palace, and who wrote his life, observes, that along with magnanimous fortitude, he evinced a merciful meekness, to a degree, that was almost beyond what is attainable by human nature *. Such, again, was that Charles the Bald, to whom Pope John wrote, saying, "ab infantia crevit vobiscum miseratio."

It is curious to observe how this disposition was estimated in later times, and to hear Luther, on the revolt of the peasants, blaming the patience of Duke John of Saxony, and saying, that he had formerly learned from monks, his confessors, to support the disobedience of his subjects †. The King Don Emmanuel of Portugal one day returned thanks to a man for having discovered reasons why a certain criminal should not be put to death; and Don John III., king of the same Portugal, assisting at a judgment, and observing that the voices were equally divided, on being asked to give his own, replied, "You have done right in finding him guilty, and the others ought to have been of your opinion; but, nevertheless, my voice shall absolve him; for it must not be said, that by the single voice of the king, a subject has been condemned to death ‡."

The early history of Spain presents a memorable example of the same kind. Shortly after the coronation of Wamba, at Toledo, a conspiracy was formed by certain nobles in Catalonia, which was soon manifested in open rebellion. The king sent an army against them, under the command of Paulus, a distinguished general; but no sooner had this traitor arrived at the quarters of the rebels, than he declared himself one of their number, and persuaded his troops to pass over with him into Gaul.

* Vita et actus Lud. Pii, apud Duchesne, tom. ii.

† Michelet Mem. de Luth. 11.

‡ Savedra Christian Prince, tom. ii. c. 85.

On their approaching Narbonne, Argebadus, the Archbishop, at first closed the gates against them; but being unable, rather than unwilling, to make an effectual resistance, the rebel army took possession of the city. Then Paulus harangued the troops, and having declared Wamba to be dethroned, was himself saluted King of the Goths. On receiving intelligence of what had occurred, Wamba hastily passed the Pyrenees, and the two armies came to battle near the city of Narbonne, when victory declared for the legitimate king. On his advance to enter the city, the Archbishop was deputed to go out, and intercede for the vanquished. At the fourth stone from the gate, he met the king, and immediately alighting from his horse, presented himself as a suppliant. His address was affecting. "Pity," he said, "O king, men who, through ignorance, or the common calamity of the times, or by an insuperable force of fate, have fallen into this crime. The greater their treason, the greater will be your glory if you have mercy on them." Wamba, in warlike acts equal to any former king, was surpassed by none in clemency. "Moved by your entreaties," he replied, "I grant these men life; but lest the absolution of wickedness should be interpreted, as if there were to be impunity, hereafter, for all offences, the chiefs of the rebellion must suffer the punishment which I deem necessary for preserving the dignity of the empire." The archbishop proceeding to urge him further, and to implore a complete pardon, the king closed his mouth, saying, "Does it not seem enough to have suffered the culprits to live? We have pardoned you, archbishop, because you were unwillingly accessary to the revolt; but as for these men, let them think it sufficient gain to have escaped ignominious death." Then the king entered the city, and at the head of the troops, commanded Paulus to be degraded from all military honour; after which, he led him back a prisoner into Spain, along with the other chief conspirators; and, on entering Toledo, Paulus was led in triumph, wearing a black leather crown on his head, and then, with the others, was consigned to perpetual imprisonment. All this is related by Julian, the archbishop, and repeated by Mariana. If the doom should be thought severe, we must, at the same time, acknowledge, that there is no government existing at the present day which would not, under such circumstances,

have inflicted death. Much importance, however, should not be ascribed to any form or accident of government; although one cannot avoid being struck with the fact of the insensibility of all democratic states, but such as are purely and fervently Catholic, to the suffering of persons who are not in harmony with their views. It was a singular trait of magnanimity which Socrates ascribed to his countrymen, after relating their determined contest against the king, when he says, that they prepared themselves to make war for freedom, but that they forgave those other states who chose his alliance, thinking, that with their humble means of defence, it was allowable for them to seek safety in any way whatever *. In general, for neither persons nor states, would there, under such circumstances, be any mercy. In our time, the gates of Spielberg have opened at the voice of an emperor, while those of Ham remain closed, under a system of rule professedly popular, and in pursuance of a sentence which is said to have been the work of no one; from which it is but natural to infer, that a prisoner may have more to hope from a personal enemy, than from a cold and passionless abstraction, though supported by men who are continually repeating the words philanthropy, moral progress, and beneficence.

Leaving, however, such points, let us attend to the maxims of government, and judicial administration, which were universally received during the ages involved in this history. St. Augustin had shown, that mercy was to attend justice, even in the formal decision of the civil tribunal; and commenting on the words of Solomon, noli esse justus multum, had said, "the law, because it cannot mitigate itself, must be mitigated by us, in order that it may benefit those acting under it. He, therefore, is not just to excess, who is an imitator of God †." Pelisson, in defending Fouquet, reminded the king of this doctrine, and also appealed to the oath which he had taken at his coronation, in face of the altar, before heaven and earth, angels and men. "Item ut in omnibus judiciis æquitatem et misericordiam præcipiam; ut mihi et vobis indulgeat suam misericordiam clemens et misericors Deus." Kings, therefore, were anointed with oil, that they might be, as it were, consecrated with

* Paneg. 60. † In Quæst. Vet. Test. Q. 15. iv.

the unction of mercy * ; and, consequently, in the rescripts of Arcadius and Honorius, and in the edicts of Constantine, the imperial office is expressed by the terms "tranquillity, and serenity." St. Cyril, of Alexandria, reminds the Emperor Theodosius, that it becomes his dignity to possess a serene and placable mind. "A prince who would know all things," says Vincent of Beauvais, "must pardon many †." The office of chancellor, and of a court of equity, is thus described by Hincmar ‡ :— "If any cause should be such, that the worldly laws should not have provided for it in their definitions, or that, according to the custom of the Gentiles, they should have ordained statutes with more cruelty in regard to it, so that the rectitude of Christianity, or holy authority, could not justly consent to them, it must, in that case, be transferred by the court of the palace to the moderation of the king, in order that he, along with those who have the knowledge of both laws, and who justly fear more the statutes of God's law, than those of human laws, may so determine it, that where both can be preserved, both may be preserved; but where the law of the world deserves to be repressed, the justice of God may be preserved." The universal doctor, who flourished in the twelfth century, speaks more strongly still to rulers, in recommendation of mercy.—"O man, in the misery of another recognise thyself. If thou art just, thou canst fall; if wise, the wisdom of man has no constancy. Thou who hast experienced in God the fountain of mercy, should at least suffer the streamlet of compassion to flow to thy neighbour. What will it be if thou, to whom thy Saviour has been clement and pious, shouldst be pitiless and austere to thy fellow-men? In the mercy of God, thou canst read what thou oughtest to do in holding the rule of clemency, and certes thou shouldst rather embrace mercy than justice; for every man ought to be naturally more inclined to mercy than to justice, for mercy produces love, but justice fear; and love is more worthy than fear, since charity excludes fear. There are many things which admonish us to relax somewhat from justice;—the infirmity of human nature,—the utility of the thing,—yea, the very dignity of mercy, which exalteth judgment. Let

* Cresolii Anth. Sac. † Speculum Doctrinal.
‡ Rem. aa. c. 21.

mercy arise, therefore, not from negligence, not from pusillanimity, not from indiscretion; but let it be, in every respect, so circumscribed, that it may retain its own property, and infringe not upon other virtues. Behold, O man, in Joseph, mercy which forgets the injustice of his brethren;—in David, the grace of clemency, which weeps for the madness of his persecuting son. If thou shutteth the bowels of thy mercy against others, thou shuttest the door of the mercy of Christ against thyself; for mercy is the key which unlocks heaven. This is the gate of the Lord; the just shall enter it. It is mercy which illuminates the New Testament, and mitigates the rigour of the ancient law; this is the wood which sweetens the ocean wave; this is the salt with which Elisha exterminated the bitterness of the waters; this is the meal which Elisha used against death. Clemency is the ornament of princes. O man, where wilt thou appear, unless clemency should come to thy assistance? What will be thy punishment, if God should execute justice in thy regard? Be not avaricious, therefore, in dispensing mercy; for thou hast thyself experienced the largess of mercy in God*." The docility of magistrates in attending to the suggestions of the merciful, and in recognizing constantly their own responsibility to a divine judgment, is often presented in a most remarkable manner during the ages of faith. Witness a scene in Venice, in the year 1552. At a time when the tribunal of Quaranthia was assembled, in which the doge, with the senators, sat to determine causes of life and death, lo! a hermit, or friar, enters the hall of judgment, crying out, with a terrific voice, "To hell shall go all who do not administer true justice;—to hell the mighty who oppress the poor;—to hell the judges who shed the blood of the innocent." After the first emotions of surprise, this intruder was recognised to be Matthieu de Bassio, a Capuchin friar, who, two years before, had exercised in Venice the evangelic ministry, with an admirable zeal and courage. He was known in that city as a holy stranger, intrepid in admonishing sinners, constant in preaching, spending his days in works of mercy, and, having no habitation, his nights under the portico of St. Mark, or of the Rialto, or under the campanile of

* Alani de Insulis Summa de Arte Prædicatoria, cap. 18.

the church of St. Moses. After a short sleep on the ground, or on the little tables of the merchants, he used to pass the remaining hours of darkness before the church-doors in prayer. He had been accustomed to enter frequently the courts of the tribunals, denouncing eternal woe on all who suffered the poor to be oppressed; and sometimes he indicated clearly enough, that there was somewhat to correct in the administration; so that the government, feeling his correction too sharp, under pretence of placing him in a position to do more good, decreed that he should remove to preach at Fossaclodia, which is a city in the Venetian territory, not far distant; and two years had elapsed since his removal thither, when he made his appearance in this manner before the tribunal. The doge, being displeased at such an interruption, made signs to the officers of the vestibule, that they should eject him from the hall; but Sebastian Venerius, one of the illustrious senators, interposed, and turning to the doge and other senators, said, "Most serene prince, and conscript fathers, we are constituted by God judges in this republic; and what ought to be more desired by us in our administration of justice, than that we should be admonished of our duty by celestial messengers? This is a most serious judgment, for another sentence can be corrected; but that which deprives men of life is immutable. Here we cannot take counsel with too much deliberation, and these words of the holy man merely recall to our minds how important and perilous is the office which we discharge. And though there is to us all, by the benignity of God, that rectitude of mind which would hold in horror a wilful violation of justice, yet, on account of many causes, our judgment may sometimes sleep. And now, if God should have sent this man, and destined him as an angel to our city, that he should awaken us from sleep, ought he to be driven out thus, or is the divine benefit of admonition to be rejected, because we judge the man who conveys it to be sordid, estimating his mind from the habit which he wears? Far be such scorn from us senators, who are disciples of the humble fisherman." These words of Venerius made such an impression on the assembly, that the friar had permission, from that day forward, to repeat his imprecations wherever he pleased. This Venerius was he who, subsequently, commanded the fleet of the republic, to whose prudence and vigilance

the glorious victory over the Turks, in 1571, was partly ascribed; and who finally attained to the supreme honours, being elected doge in 1578 *. With historic truth, many of the Venetian princes are represented, in the palace of the dukes, in solemn paintings, in company with saints and angels, adoring the Saviour; and thus the mystery of all this is explained.

The kings of Portugal had made the archbishops of Bragua lords of that city and territory, so that the civil, as well as the ecclesiastical, jurisdiction belonged to them. They had their criminal courts, therefore, and their chamber of justice; and the directions which these magistrates received, respecting their administration, would throw great light upon the history of judicial manners in ages of faith. The discourse which Bartholomew de Martyribus addressed to them, on being raised to that see, was truly pathetic. He besought them to aid him in dispensing prompt and effectual justice, that the poor might have the same facilities as the rich; and adding, that he came not to complain of them, but, moved by pastoral charity, to remind them, that it is a great thing for a man to be judged by a man, and still greater for a Christian to be judged by a Christian. "The Pagans," said he, "recognized the first truth, and the holy scripture teacheth the second. You are the judges of your brethren, and God is your Judge, to whom you must one day render a strict account of every sentence that you render here. How must not man tremble," he added, "when he considers, in a criminal cause, that his opinion can deprive a man of life? I know that there is, at times, a necessity to constrain you, and that one must not arm licence by the hope of impunity; but, O, let humanity and gentleness never be put aside, even when justice must prevail †." Thomas Carbonel, bishop of Siguença, being also the temporal lord of that city, used to obviate the necessity of having recourse to the tribunals, by his personal efforts in reconciling enemies, and terminating disputes; and when some interested officers complained that many faults were left, in consequence, unpunished, the bishop replied, that the parties being satisfied, order

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1552.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 31.

re-established, and public peace preserved, one ought to be content, whatever were the means employed *.

Independent, therefore, of any natural cause, we must perceive, from such examples as these, that as the monarchies of Europe had been, in a great measure, originally the work of the Episcopal order, there was reason to expect, that a larger proportion of the spirit of mercy should enter into their composition than could have ever been developed under any previous state of human society. St. Bernard's work, "De Consideratione," was recommended, in the middle ages, as a manual for all rulers, who might learn from it how they ought to examine themselves, in order to estimate their own advance in virtue. The questions proposed to Pope Eugene, were such as these:—"Have you made proficiency in sweetness of manners? Are you more patient, more lenient, more easily entreated, more clement, more discreet †?" Pope Gregory IX. made St. Raymond de Pegnafort his own confessor; and Clement VIII. testifies, that the usual penance which he imposed on that pontiff, was to hear, with benignity, the prayers and just complaints of those who were without protection, and to expedite the cause of widows and orphans ‡. Such were the men who were at the side of kings in the middle ages, ever labouring to calm, to mitigate, to preserve. Geoffroy de Beaulieu, the dominican confessor to St. Louis during twenty-two years, wishing to console that devout king on the death of his mother, and to give his mind some distraction, used to propose, we are told, some works of mercy for him to perform §. "After trial, and just judgment," says an ancient historian, of Normandy, "Pandulf, Prince of Capua, was condemned to death; but, by the prayers of the Archbishop of Cologne, the emperor was persuaded to remit the sentence ||." To the last, the clergy were faithful to their blessed rule. Cornelius Agrippa acknowledges, that the Emperor Charles V. would have certainly put him to death, if he had not been prevented by the intercession of the bishop of Liege,

* Id. tom. v. liv. 39.
† De Consideratione, lib. ii. c. 11.
‡ Clemen. VIII. in Bull. Con. n. 16.
§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. 3.
|| L'Ystoire de li Normant, lib. i. c. 24.

and of Cardinal Campegio *. Those privileges of clergy, of which we hear so much, have been strangely misinterpreted by many modern writers. If the Irish synod, in the eighth century, whose decrees were published by Dacherius, declares that no one must presume, without the bishop's permission, to cite any clerk before a secular judge †, the same synod decrees, that for similar offences, the punishment of clerks should be double of that which would be incurred by laics ‡.

In the ecclesiastical courts men found science and charity. From their codes the pains of death and mutilation were banished. If their jurisdiction extended not only over the clergy and their numerous vassals, but also beyond all limits that could seem assignable to them, the reason must be sought in public confidence, and in the mercy of the Church, which co-operated with the efforts of the poor people to escape from the rigour and corruption of the secular tribunals. At the same time it should be remembered, that if the law towards some classes was weak, religion was firm and uncompromising; that these privileged persons were subject to the tribunal of penance; and that the canons of the Church forbade absolution where wrong had been committed, unless the best satisfaction possible followed. Besides, let it be observed, if the sanctuaries afforded a refuge to the criminal, he was not sure of impunity. A certain time only was allowed, till his friends could prove his innocence, or, if guilty, engage to pay the pecuniary compensation. Nor was this protection awarded to all; for some criminals might be dragged from the very altar, to receive the punishment of their crimes.

We beheld the penitents before amongst the blessed mourners, and here again we catch a glimpse at them as criminals, suffering the pains enjoined by apostolic authority. Now, reader, think within thyself how any fear and execration of guilt could be inspired greater than by the sight of what thou mayest see in this place, though death is not seen. The wretch who moves this way is Lomberd, a layman soldier of the Count of Catana. Barefoot he walks, his hand armed with rods, having his legs and arms naked, and his countenance distorted in

* In Querela super Calumn. Scholast. et Monach.

† Lib. xx. cap. 26. ‡ Id. lib. xxviii. cap. 7.

such guise that the tongue hangs out like an ox that licks his nostrils; but on looking nearer, one perceives that it is pulled without the lips by means of a slight cord, of which the other end is fastened to the neck. In this state he has with haste returned to his country. During fifteen days he must continually show himself upon his own lands where he was born, and upon the land where his crime was perpetrated; and on reaching the entrance of the churches, he must refrain from going farther; he must prostrate himself upon the earth outside, and from his own hand receive the discipline. And thus, in absolute silence and fasting, he is obliged to pass each day till after vespers, when he takes bread and water sufficient to sustain nature; and after the time allotted he is to depart for the Holy Land, where he must serve in the Christian army during three years, fasting until the last every sixth feria on bread and water. He cannot speak, to tell thee of his crime; but the public voice proclaims it. This is the man who, being in the army of the Count of Catana, and present at the storming of the castle in which the Bishop of Catana was made prisoner, was constrained by some of the count's soldiers to cut out that prelate's tongue; for which barbarous act the third Innocent hath imposed upon him the penance which you behold him suffering *. The next that follows hath to endure longer misery. Barefoot he also walks, clad in a woollen tunic and a short scapular, having a penitential staff of the length of one cubit in his hand. His famished looks move you to pity; but lo! he refuses your generous alms, and will accept but that poor pittance which will suffice to procure food essential to sustain nature for one day, as he is forbidden to take more from any one. Henceforth to his death he must never taste flesh, whatever be his necessity or disease; and on every sixth feria, as also on the second and fourth during Lent, he fasts on bread and water. In one place he must never remain for two successive nights; and during three years he must visit the thresholds of the saints, without presuming to enter the churches until he has received the discipline prostrate. One hundred and twenty times each day the prayer of our Lord must pass his lips with due attention, while his knee humbly bends between each

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. v. 77.

pause ; and when three years are expired he is ordered to return to the apostolic see, to ask for mercy. Meanwhile, however, the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and priors, to whom the chief pontiff's letters have come greeting, are enjoined to show mercy to the miserable, opening to him in his necessity the bowels of commiseration. O holy Church of Rome! how wonderful the art which thou dost manifest in the evil world, tempering severity with mercy!—how just a meed allotting, by thy virtue, unto all! This penitent, by name Robert, came to the holy see, confessing with tears and groans his dreadful sin, and relating that when captured by the Saracens, and confined with his wife and daughter, there came an order from the chief, that in consequence of the want of food, whatever captive had a child should kill it; on which occasion, being pressed by famine, he killed his daughter and ate her flesh ; and when, a second time, there were similar orders given, he killed his wife, though of her flesh he durst not partake. Pope Innocent, disturbed, as he declares, by the horror of such a crime, hath imposed upon him this penance *. Had we time to stay longer here, of such penitents many a flock we should behold, all weeping piteously, to different laws subjected—living witnesses to the world how greatly should be feared the vengeance of Heaven!

There are many occasions on which we must remark that the systematic opposition to the influence of the holy see, and of the ecclesiastical power in general, was always accompanied with a disposition to exercise greater severity in the punishment of criminals. It is a fact not a little curious, that the reign of St. Louis should have been distinguished for the celebrated measures which are supposed to be the foundation of what are termed the liberties of the Gallican Church, and also for the publication of the "Establishments," in which the penalties seem so wantonly rigorous, and according to which justice was to be administered with such extreme severity. Stephen Pasquier, who even in this instance shows his disinclination to ultramontain principles, says that the gibbet is one of the chief means by which a republic remains calm and without trouble †.

* Id. lib. v. 78.

† Recherches de la France, liv. viii. 40.

So taught not men in earlier times of faith. St. Augustin writes to Count Marcellinus in behalf of certain criminals, and says, "Notwithstanding the greatness of their wickedness, I implore you that their penalty may be less than death, on account of our conscience, and on account of Catholic mildness. Lest they should incur the pain of eternal judgment, we desire that they may be corrected, not slain." Although the Church had to denounce the error of certain heretics, who maintained that men ought never to be put to death by human laws, for this was one of the maxims of the Waldenses, which Alanus de Insulis refuted in the twelfth century, it is certain that the Catholic mildness of which St. Augustin speaks would have found much in the earlier codes conformable to its desires.

The pain of death seems hardly to have been contemplated in the eighth century. By the legislators of Ireland, of whom we have already heard, the penalty of a wicked man's crime, say they, is first to fall upon his substance; if he has no substance, then upon his land; if no land, then upon his lord; if no lord, then upon the man who gave him arms and clothes, or who gave him food and a bed; and if no such person should be discovered, it falls upon the chief ruler of the province *. If, however, the Church hath given meat to the criminal, his penalty falls not upon her, though she may have given it to an evil man—"quia Columba vera est; Columba autem non suis tantum pullis ministrat, sed omnibus avibus aperientibus os suum †."

Pecuniary compositions for crimes was a prominent feature of all the ancient Germanic codes, which proves the anxiety of those legislators to stay the bloody hand of revenge; and it has been justly remarked, that "to make the acceptance of a fine obligatory on the party aggrieved, in nations amongst whom the deadly feud had been so long known, was a wise and a humane measure. If the minute graduation of these compositions should at first seem ridiculous, we should consider, as the same writer observes, that this anxiety to fix a scale of compensation for every possible crime, effectually prevented the infliction of arbitrary or oppressive penalties. Chil-

* Id. lib. xli. cap. 28.
† Dacher. Spicileg. tom. ix. Id. cap. 29.

debert decreed, that for deliberate homicide the pecuniary compensation should cease, and that qui injuste novit occidere, discat juste mori. This decree, however, had little effect; but the Carlovingians renewed it, and assigned death, though the history of Charlemagne proves that in regard to the worst criminals he generally commuted death into seclusion within the walls of a monastery. The correspondence between St. Augustin and Pope Gregory the Great presents an interesting illustration of the mildness which the ecclesiastical influence was prompt to infuse into the legislature. To the question what punishment is to be inflicted on stealers from a church, St. Augustin replies that a distinction should be made between those who steal through want, and those whom want does not affect, and that the number of stripes must be proportioned accordingly. Yet even when the crime was more aggravated, he enjoins that the chastisement be applied in love, not in anger, lest a soul should be sent to the fires of hell. "In our corrections of the faithful," he adds, "we must imitate worldly parents, who, though they inflict pain on their sons, yet design these sons to possess their inheritance. Thou askest what amount of compensation will satisfy the Church? God forbid that the Church should gain from her losses—that she should profit from crime!" Yet in all ages the Church was anxious that strict justice should be maintained; and here we may remark the action of mercy in facilitating the redress of the poor, who could always find speedy satisfaction by applying in person to the highest authorities at once, without either incurring delay or expense. The example of St. Louis sitting under the oak of Vincennes is well known, but the clergy led the way here. St. John the Almoner, patriarch of Constantinople, used to place a chair and table before the Church on the fourth and sixth ferias, in order that the poor might approach him without obstacle for a decision of their causes, saying, that if men entering the Church wished to be heard quickly by God in their affairs, they ought, before entering, to hear the poor quickly, and give them satisfaction. It was by the advice of St. Dunstan that King Edgar exhibited new zeal in the discovery and punishment of the numerous criminals who, during the late domestic troubles, had so long agitated the kingdom. But the sword

of justice was seldom unsheathed. Banishment, whether for a period or perpetually, was the usual penalty of crime. On one occasion, however, St. Dunstan inquired of the people whether justice should not be done on three criminals, then in custody, convicted of coining false money. As the day was a high festival, and the primate was about to celebrate mass, the reply was that justice had better be deferred. "Not so," said the archbishop; "I know of no crime more injurious to society than the one committed by these men; nor will I approach the altar until they have suffered the penalty decreed by the laws. My conduct may seem cruel, but God knows my motive. I have a duty to fulfil towards the widow, the orphan, and the poor, who have been injured by these criminals. I must not, by false notions of mercy, remit or suspend the legal penalty; for by so doing, I encourage others to crime." Eadmer, however, observes, that his heart belied his words; that he wept while the malefactors suffered the legal punishment; but that when justice was done, he washed his face and advanced with a more cheerful countenance to the altar.

St. Vincent Ferrier similarly gave proof not alone of mercy, but of a love of justice and regard to the interests of society. It happened, while he was at Genoa, that a malefactor who was of Valencia, his own native city, was arrested, convicted of many crimes, and condemned to death. Several persons prayed him to use his interest with the doge or the senate to gain freedom for this man. A word from him would have opened the prison doors; but he judged that such mercy would have been a false virtue, and contented himself with saving the prisoner's life and having his sentence commuted in such a manner that he would have space for penance, and yet society be secured from a renewal of his crimes *.

The capitularies of Charles the Bald evinced great zeal and rigour in the punishment of robbers, who, if they fled into a different kingdom, were liable to be seized there and sent back to the judges of the state where the crime was committed †.

The counsel of St. Bernard to Pope Eugene was

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xvii.

† Capit. Car. Calv. Duchesne, tom. ii.

conformable to these examples. "You will not be innocent," he says, "if either you punish him who ought perhaps to be spared, or spare him who ought to be punished *." When Theobald Noterius fled to Rome, after procuring the murder of Thomas Prior, of St. Victor, at Paris, St. Bernard wrote to Pope Innocent in these terms :—"The wild beast that hath devoured Joseph is said to have applied to you for assistance, as if the seat of highest equity were a den of lions. He flies to the bosom of a mother, though still wet with the blood of her son. If he seeks penance, it is not to be refused to him; but if it be an audience that he demands, let him have such as blessed Peter gave to Ananias and Sapphira, for the voice of a brother's blood cries against him from the earth †."

But even of the basest criminals the doom was not without much weeping sealed; and where the punishment of death was awarded, its execution was certainly attended with very different symptoms in society from those which are at present observable in countries where the principles and manners of faith have been superseded. A recent traveller, who beheld the execution of a murderer at Turin, remarks, that amidst the multitude present he does not believe there were twenty women, and those of the lowest description ‡. Pity, not curiosity, moved the rest, on hearing of the vengeful doom, though just.

St. Chrysostom remarks, that when the patriarch and his family had entered the ark, God closed its door with the same hand as that with which he made the world; adding, "Nor did he permit those within to behold what passed without, for this reason, that although those who perished were most wicked, yet the minds of good men have great compassion, even when they see the guilty punished; and therefore the Father of the human race consulted the consolation of a piteous and holy man, in not allowing him to see the destruction of sinners §."

The use of torture had come down from the Pagans. Its having been continued through the middle ages must be ascribed to the fact that the legislation had not been wholly delivered from the old error. It does certainly

* De Consideratione, lib. ii. cap. 11.
† Epist. clviii.
‡ Bell's Observations on Italy.
§ Hom. 25, in Gen.

seem strange, and a just cause for profound humiliation, that so long a time should have been necessary to convince all just men of the inconsistency of such contrivance horrible with the charity of the gospel. The ecclesiastical courts rejected all extorted confessions, but in the secular still prevailed the opinion of the old civilized world—ut facinoris veritas quæ indice vocis non promitur, dolore corporis exprimatur *. We can only account for this by the disposition of the Christians to suffer rather than to act, to take as little part as possible in public affairs, and by remarking that the complete extinction of Pagan traditions in the administration of the civil power was necessarily a work of time. As effects are often not produced until the cause which led to them has been removed, so the total abolition of this execrable custom was at length obtained, though not until the faith which had been for eighteen centuries in constant action to undermine it had in many places ceased to operate. Be this as it may, the religious reformers have won no glory here. The torture was not abolished in Sweden till a short time before Howard's visit. In Hanover it was still used in 1781, and at Hambourg he gives a fearful description of what he saw. Nowhere does he seem to have found so horrible a scene of torment provided for captives as in the prison at Nuremberg, which was the first city that embraced the reform, and where he penetrated into the dismal chamber of torture on which he read the horrible line—

"Ad mala patrata, hæc sunt atra theatra parata."

I forbear to cite domestic testimony, but the Catholic traditions of England are still fresh, and therefore such evidence may be passed over. At the same time, we must remember that the legitimacy of torture was not an universal belief in the middle ages. It is not the fact, that every man in judicial authority approved of it. The difficulty was, to inspire mercy in the civil power, which, without the influence of the Church, would have often lapsed into a cruelty even surpassing that of the ancient governments; for men who resisted the mercy of Christ were of the blackest dye of all; and it sometimes hap-

* S. Cyprian, Tractat. cont. Demetr.

pened that the ferocity of men was too strong for the ecclesiastical spirit to repress it, as when the French court would not permit the constable of St. Pol to receive the communion before his execution *,—fearful instance of what Richard Plantagenet says, in the words of Shakspeare,—

> "———— heart be wrathful still,—
> Priests pray for enemies, but princes kill."

With respect, however, to severity of legislation in general, there may, perhaps, be some truth in the observation, that in proportion as a people becomes sensual and merciless, its laws will become mild; for it will have the desire and the energy to throw off whatever presses hard upon the passions, in the same manner as with corruption of manners language often affects greater chastity; and in a licentious and unprincipled community, every one fears for himself—a fact which did not escape the notice of ancient writers, one of whom says, "Cum sint mali, tanquam suæ sibi conscii malitiæ sibi timent, et malos prædicant non puniri. Hoc autem pietatis intuitu non prædicant, sed timore †." Besides, we might expect to find severity of punishment in proportion to the sense entertained of the magnitude of danger or crime; and it was certainly a maxim of our ancient legislators, qui parcit uni malo nocet omnibus bonis. That it was just and useful to terrify the imagination of the people by the appalling forms of execution, no one will question who reflects how much their abolition has tended to embolden desperate men, who have so often been found to encourage each other by the remark that the worst they could suffer would be from a blow of the guillotine—a death not even ignominious in their eyes, and which some great criminals have declared preferable to the protracted sufferings of an old man, confirming their opinion by the verses of a poet:—

> "While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
> Ours with one pang, one bound, escapes control."

But it is enough to glance at such an odious subject. There is evidently a dilemma. The assent of the ancient

* Pasquier, Recherches de la France, vi. 10.
† Evrardus cont. Waldens. c. 15.

Christian legislators to what they had found existing, presents, no doubt, a difficulty; but however severe or execrable their customs may have been, our duty, in the present instance, as observers of manners, imposes on us the strict obligation of never viewing them apart from a series of most remarkable facts, attesting the heroic exercise of individual mercy, either in attempts to infuse greater mildness into the civil authority, or in saving culprits from the hands of the temporal magistrate. Witness that noble judge, of the Brignioli family at Genoa, whose portrait is seen, among those of other benefactors, in the Albergo dei Poveri in that city, who renounced the high office with which the state had entrusted him, and became a priest, rather than continue to administer law under a legislature which required torture. The traitors who conspired against the Emperor Lewis, were condemned to death, but he would not consent to have the sentence executed. Bernhard, however, the chief who sought to dethrone him, had his eyes put out, and died three days afterwards; and when the emperor heard of the event, he wept with great lamentation during a long time, and made his confession before all the bishops, and received penance from them, because he had not prohibited his counsellors from performing this cruelty; and on this account, he gave great alms to the poor for the purgation of his soul *. Witness, again, the act of King Edward the Confessor, which was delineated and wrought in the hangings about the choir of Westminster abbey, and which is thus briefly related by an ancient writer:— "The king detected, three times, a poor courtier pilfering money from his casket, and when his chamberlain was greatly moved on discovering the theft, the king willed him not to be grieved. 'For,' said he, 'he that hath it, hath more need of it than we have.'" Similarly, King Charles the Fifth of France would not suffer the law to be enforced against his barber, when detected in attempting three times to steal gold from his person. Hear how a contemporary relates the merciful acts of King Robert. "Being about to celebrate the holy Pasch at his palace of Compiegne, twelve nobles were arrested, on a charge of having conspired to assassinate him. After interrogating them, he ordered that they should be confined in

* Thegani de Gestis Ludovic. Pii, 23.

the house of Charles the Bald, fed with royal viands, and on the holy day of the resurrection, fortified with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the second feria, they were tried and condemned, but the pious and prudent king absolved them, on account of the benign Jesus, saying, that men, nourished with celestial food and drink, ought not to be condemned. Lest, however, they should return to act iniquity, he addressed them in holy words, and then dismissed them, to return to their own homes *." Ogger, a poor clerk, coming from the kingdom of Lothaire, was received by Robert, and associated into his college of clerks; but he was a traitor, like another Judas. One evening after supper, when the darkness of night covered the earth, the king, as usual, went to his chapel, to say his last prayers; his clerks preceding him, carrying massive candlesticks, which, being placed, he retired into a corner, and meditated. At this moment, Ogger approached the altar, and thinking himself unobserved, seized one of the candlesticks, and concealing it under his dress, departed. When the clerks returned, and discovered the theft, they asked the pious king concerning it, but he would give no information. Constantia, the queen, of whom it used to be said,

"Constans et fortis, quæ non Constantia ludit,"

was inflamed with anger, and she declared, that the eyes of the sacristains should be put out, unless the thief was discovered. The king, hearing this, took the wretch aside, and said, "Friend Ogger, depart hence, lest my inconstant Constantia should destroy you. To provide for your return to the land of your nativity, you have already taken enough. May the Lord be with you, wherever you go. Depart quickly †."

These are not isolated examples: they paint whole ages. St. Benedict, of Aniana, would not even punish the robbers, who committed depredations on the estates of his monastery. When the peasants one day brought him a man, whom they had caught riding away with several horses belonging to the fraternity, and whom they had ill-used, he caused the thief to be healed, and dis-

* Helgaldi Epit. Vit. Rob. ap. Duchesne Hist. Franc. Script. iv.
† Id.

missed. On another occasion, while walking with a monk in the neighbouring fields, he met a man mounted on one of his horses; and when the monk called his attention to the circumstance, he contented himself with observing, that many horses were alike; though he afterwards admitted, that he knew both the animal and the thief. Of St. Gregory, of Utrecht, we have a similar anecdote, related by his friend and disciple, St. Liudger. Two of his brothers had been murdered in a forest. The murderers were seized, and, in conformity with Germanic custom, were brought to him, that he might decide on their fate. He caused them to be bathed, clothed, fed, and quietly dismissed with this gentle admonition:—"Go in peace, but refrain hereafter from crime, lest a worse thing happen to you." These examples are, indeed, of ancient date; but let it be remembered, that St. Antoninus, the great Archbishop of Florence, amidst all the refinement and complicated interests of one of the richest cities of Europe in the sixteenth century, acted in the same manner. A certain scandalous priest, named Ciardi, who had been cited before his tribunal, came to his house before the hour of audience, entered his chamber, where he found him alone, and, without saying a word, struck at him with a dagger, and with such force, that, on the archbishop leaning aside to escape the blow, the poignard remained sticking in the back of the chair. The holy prelate, retaining his wonted composure, only knelt down to thank God, and the assassin fled. From that day, the saint never ceased to pray for his conversion, and on no account would he suffer him to be pursued. After some time, his devout prayers were heard. Ciardi entered into himself, and, in order that his penance should be as long as his life, took the habit of St. Francis, in the little convent of St. Michael, where his perseverance edified the faithful, and consoled the holy archbishop *. Such was the unwillingness of men who loved justice, in these ages of mercy, to punish persons who were guilty of the greatest crimes. Commiseration and solicitude for such wretches, in a Catholic country, is even at the present day sanctioned by the magistrates, who permit and encourage merciful individuals to come forward in their

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. iii. liv. xx.

favour; which conduct of rulers and people has most certainly come down from the ages of faith; for so little has modern philanthropy contributed, that all moral writers of the present day denounce it in the severest terms, as a morbid sensibility, debasing and injurious.

Following the steps of the blessed merciful, we must now enter the prisons; and, therefore, prepare thy soul, companion, to encounter objects full of gloom; for I will nothing extenuate, but show thee at once the dismal reality, the first glance at which will remove all fear that we shall not find the dungeons terrible enough. Nevertheless, ere we pass the first threshold, let me admonish thee to stand upon thy guard against the inference that modern sophists are sure to draw from a retrospect of this kind. It is well to be armed against them from the first; and, therefore, mark well this fact, which, in few words, can put them down;—that however deplorable may have been the condition of prisoners in the middle ages, the revolution of the sixteenth century, and the religion which succeeded, brought them no relief, as the black assizes at Oxford, in 1577, could bear witness. The Chancellor Bacon and Dr. Mead ascribe the death of the chief justice, the sheriff, and three hundred persons on that occasion, to an infection brought into court by the prisoners. Testimony of the same kind, to the influence of the new opinions upon the state of prisons, was afforded at Taunton in 1730; and again, twenty-five years later, at Axminster, when the whole town was infected by the release of one prisoner; and again at London, in 1750, when three judges, the lord mayor, and a number of others, died of the jail fever, of which Howard found little or no trace in any Catholic country. The great prison at Naples contained, in 1781, nine hundred and eighty prisoners; yet he found no indication of fever, but an air within it as wholesome as in the prisons of Austrian Flanders, France, Spain, or Tuscany, "where you rarely experience," he says, "that infectious odour which fills the English prisons, as also those of Sweden, Denmark, and Russia. In Spain," he says, "most prisons have spacious courts, fountains, running streams, arcades, and fresh air." The fact is, that every cruelty, every abuse, in regard to prisoners, was left untouched by the reformers, while in countries that remained Catholic, a gradual amelioration had taken place; so that

at the close of the eighteenth century, when Howard wrote, the condition of prisoners was incomparably more wretched, amidst the nations of the north, than where Catholicism still reigned. The first pages of his work on the state of prisons disclose a fearful picture of the inhumanity which was exercised towards persons in confinement in England. Their allowance of food being determined by the relative value of money in remote times, had become insufficient for the support of life; and when the guardians of the bridewells used to ask for additional food, the reply of the magistrates was, "Let them work or die;" though in many places, they were not permitted to work, or receive profit from their work. The prisons opened only once in the year; and at Hull, the assizes were held only once in seven years. The reform had not done more for prisoners in other nations. Such was the infected air in the blue tower of Copenhagen, that when the Count Struensee was drawn from it to be led to a terrible death, he exclaimed, "O what a pleasure to breathe the fresh air!" Howard found that the prisons of Sweden were not better administered than those of Denmark; the air was infected in them all. In a prison at Stockholm, remarking the half-famished looks of some prisoners, whose allowance of bread and water was barely sufficient to support life, the jailor scornfully replied, "It is good for the health." Yet, at this epoch, the state of prisoners, in Catholic countries, was in general far different. While in England, Scotland, and Russia, no attention was paid to their morals, he found in the prisons of Austrian Flanders, France, Spain, and Italy, wise rules to prevent any immorality, or profanation, or disorders; so that, like the prisons in Egypt, when their management was confided by the Prefect to Josephus, "the place," as Philo says, "did not resemble a prison, but σωφρονιστήριον, a school of virtuous discipline. At Antwerp, a fine of two sous was imposed on every one who swore, or uttered an imprecation. The administration of the prisons at Genoa, at Manheim, at Strasburg, and at Paris, filled him with admiration. He says, that the Agastro and the Caza di Correzione, at Milan, do honour to the country. While prisoners in England were frequently half starved to death before their trials, he found in the prisons at Florence, Naples, Paris, Madrid, and Brussels, that the food

was abundant, and wholesome. At Antwerp only, the allowance was small; but he adds, that the monasteries took care to supply what was wanting through the parsimony of the government. Similarly, the prisoners in the tower of the old castle at Bonneville, in Savoy, used to be supplied with soup on two or three days every week by a convent. While in England, prisoners were loaded with irons, at the discretion of the jailors, he found them exposed to no such cruelty and despotism in Catholic countries. Instead of the merciless despots who had charge of the English jails, whom he describes as being more cruel even than the magistrates, retaining sometimes in confinement, as at Durham, in 1755, prisoners after their acquittal, but who could not pay the price which they asked for the certificate of the judge's sentence, he found this class of men, in Catholic countries, humane, and even affectionate. "Prisoners in France," he says, "have no reason to complain of jailors." While in Scotland prisoners for debt were prohibited by law from enjoying even the fresh air, though with the jailor at their side, he found that this class of miserable men, then very small in Catholic countries, was always treated with a kind of generous liberality. By the ancient Catholic laws, the creditor was even bound to supply proper nourishment to the imprisoned debtor; and if a poor debtor should be sick in prison, he was to be carried to the house of the creditor, and have medical advice and assistance at his expense; and if the creditor refused to receive him into his house during his sickness, the debtor was to regain his liberty *. In the prison for debtors at Milan, in 1781, there were only eleven persons confined; "though," adds Howard, "this city is vast and commercial." At Strasbourg, in 1778, there were but three. At Mayence, the prison for debtors was empty; so were those at Coblentz, and at Manheim. At Cologne, in 1778, he found no prisoners of any description in the tower. In the same year, the great prison of Aix la Chapelle was empty, and in the Bad tower of Fribourg he found no prisoner.

Having this point well established, we may now recur to ancient times, with less danger of being led into error, while visiting, in imagination, the fortress or the feudal

* Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miserab. Person. 139.

dungeon, to inquire whether there can be found within them any trace or memory of the blessed merciful.

"Our forefathers," says Cicero, "meant the prison to be a security for the punishment of notorious and nefarious criminals *;" but such was not exactly the idea in the society of the middle ages, where public prisons were required; for we observed in the last book, that many cities could then boast of having no prison. Merciful correction, and not vengeance, was the object then contemplated, as the very walls were made to proclaim. On the prison at Syracuse, built by John Capoblanco, bishop of that see, might be read this inscription:—"Hic mentis sanies afflictione corporis curatur. Joannis Syracusani Episcopi pietas commiserans malos à fundamentis erexit.†" In a prison at Rome, Howard remarked the following inscription:—"Parum est coercere improbos pœna, nisi probos efficias disciplina." The words justice and clemency are inscribed over the gate of the great prison built by Innocent X. On the portal of the prison at Vienna was a striking picture of the crucifixion, in which the two thieves were represented. Over the first of the five gates which you have to pass before arriving at the court of the Prison Dellestinche at Florence, were inscribed two words, "oportet misereri," which may have served to another purpose, besides awakening a steril pity, though Howard deemed them useless. Amidst the mouldering desolate chambers that may still be traced in so many old castles, as in that of Baden, the tales that memory is sure to recall, and the dark scenes that fancy so readily suggests, will seem, indeed, to contradict this testimony, and to confirm a very different opinion respecting the nature of prisons in the middle ages. Horrible exceptions, undoubtedly, there were; but it should not be forgotten, that even under the worst circumstances wherever the Catholic religion was known, the traditions of mercy were known, at least, by some that could not be far off; and, therefore, there was a great probability that the force of measures, or the cruelty of some, could not wholly prevent the action of individual grace, and the tenderness of others. There was, besides, something always at the bottom, even of the sternest heart, to which the unhappy could appeal. The feudal tower, like the

* Catil. 11.

† Sicilia Sacra, tom. i. c. 48.

fortress of Spielberg, might confine the wretched captive; but the chances were nearly infinite against his finding a keeper wholly insensible to pity, like a personification of a political system, or the blind instrument of a blood-thirsty heart. The authentic documents of the trial of the Maréchal de Biron mention, that the name of the gaoler of the Bastille at that time was Rumigny; and the historians of that prison inform us, that he had a wife who prostrated herself in prayer when the Marechal was conducted to the scaffold. A French writer remarks, that the prison of Bonneville, in Savoy, was left in a deplorable state. He found seventeen prisoners in one of the two towers of the old castle on the mountain. "The jailor," he adds, "is a rough fellow, yet full of sensibility, and he collects alms for them with great compassion. Silvio Pellico, whose book is a book of all ages, relates, that one day, being reconducted to his dungeon, he found the door of Oroboni's cell open. They had hitherto only heard one another from their respective casements. The guards were hastening to shut it, but Pellico was too quick for them; and, in an instant, the two prisoners were in each other's arms. Schiller, the old gaoler, was confounded at the sight, exclaimed horribly, and raised his hand with a threatening air; but his eyes filled with tears, and he exclaimed, sobbing, "O my God, have mercy on these poor young people, and on me, and on all the unhappy; Thou who wast also upon earth unhappy!" You have a similar instance in the ancient chronicles of Italy. The monster Eccelino de Romano used to leave his prisoners to die of hunger. There were shrieks of woe, and a sound of hands smote together, and spectres of wretched captives expiring through famine; so that to visit one of his prisons, was like entering hell. How could one hope to find that Catholic mercy was able to penetrate here? Yet it did penetrate, as the history of Arnaldus, that mirror of monks, Abbot of St. Justina, at Padua, will demonstrate. This holy man died on Ash-Wednesday, in his prison at Asilum, in the seventieth year of his age, after remaining eight years and three months in a dark dungeon, a true martyr, who patiently and innocently endured that long passion of captivity. In the last years, the tyrant commanded that he should be left alone, and fed on black bread and water; but the guards loved him, and secretly supplied

him with better food, and with various refreshments. At his funeral, the fear of the tyrant could not prevent a vast multitude from attending, and following the body to the convent of the minors, where he was to be buried, extolling him as a martyr, and pronouncing his death to have been blessed *. During the wars between the houses of Montfort and Blois, for the duchy of Brittany, John, count of Montfort, and duke of Brittany, invited Olivier de Clisson, a Briton, and constable of France, whom he knew to favour his cousins, to inspect the castle called L'Ermine, which he had lately built in the outskirts of Vannes. On reaching the principal tower, the duke stopped below, and desired the constable to mount; and no sooner had the latter reached the first story, but he was made prisoner by some men of arms, who had been placed there for the purpose, loaded with irons, and left in solitude; and orders were given to the Seigneur de Balavan to drown him secretly at midnight. This gentleman made great remonstrance, but nothing could prevail upon the duke. Balavan, however, like a good and loyal knight, knew his master's interest better than he did himself, and resolved to wait for time to cool his passion, but to pretend that he had fulfilled his orders. After the duke's first sleep, reason began to combat his fury, and to represent the treachery of this act in its true colours. At break of day, he sent for Balavan, and asked if the sentence had been executed, who replied that it had. At this, the duke gave way to the most bitter lamentations, and ordered himself to be left alone, passing the day in tears and groans, refusing food. Towards evening, Balavan, not being able to endure that the duke should pass the night in such a state, came into his presence, and told him that he came to console him, and to bring him a remedy for everything. "Yes, for all but death," replied the duke. The other, however, informed him, with a smile, that he had disobeyed his orders, and that the constable was alive and well. Then the duke wept for joy, and promised to reward Balavan for having rendered him such a service †. So, again, the monk of Monte-cassino, in his history of the Normans, relating the delivery of Tridinocte, Hugo of Fallaise, and many others,

* Monach. Paduani Chronic. lib. ii. c. 2.

† Pasquier, Recherches de la France, vi. 30.

from their prison in the great tower of Guaymere, Prince of Salerno, in the year 1046, says, that Martin, the guardian of the prison, readily agreed to let them escape, and that for two reasons;—l'une porce qu'il avoit compassion de lor misère, and the other, in hope of a recompense *. But it was to the heart of woman especially, that prisoners, in ages of faith, were indebted; for she was imaged there, by whom the key did open to God's love; and in sweet acts of grace and tenderness did they develope what they felt within them of resemblance to that Virgin Mother, whom St. John Damascene beautifully styles the friend of mercy. What pilgrim to the holy city has not heard of that Queen, whose death did so ennoble the island in Bolsena's lake, where the king of the Ostrogoths commanded her to be slain? Cassiodorus says, that such was the incredible sweetness and gravity of her speech, that when criminals were condemned to death, they were soothed by hearing her speak to such a degree, that they made light of the judgment passed upon them. How many of these Amalasiuntas were sent upon earth in the middle ages as ministering angels, to console the miserable! St. Anastasia, a noble Roman matron, used to give all she had to the Christians in prison; and when they were executed, she wept, exclaiming, that they had taken from her the objects of her mercy; and so confessing Christ, became herself a martyr. St. Radegund, wife of King Clothaire, walking one evening after supper in the garden at Perona, the prisoners cried out to her from the grate of the prison, vociferating. She asked what cries they were, and the servants falsely said, that they arose from a crowd of beggars; and she believing them, sent out alms. Meanwhile, the prisoners were enjoined to keep silence; but when night came on, she began to make her accustomed round, and then, it is said, that these poor captives came to her, expressing their gratitude, having been miraculously freed from their chains †. During the short interval in which Latude, one of the victims of Pompadour, had enjoyed liberty after his deliverance from Vincennes, and before his second arrest, and imprisonment in a subterraneous dungeon at Bicêtre, he had written a short account of his

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. ii. c. 33.

† Vincent Bellov. Speculum Historiale, lib. xxi. c. 80.

misfortunes, intending to send it to a President of Tournelle; but the paper being lost by the messenger, Providence ordained that it should fall into the hands of a mercer's wife, named Legros, in the street of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. This woman had never seen Latude, nor was she aware that such a person existed; but he is unfortunate, and she will use every effort to save him. Her charitable husband enters into her views, she hastens to the court, employs all her interest with the subalterns; the birth of the dauphin gives occasion for an amnesty, but a surety is required; the mercer's wife subscribes it, and Latude is free, after a captivity of thirty-nine years.

The mercy of the clergy towards all persons in captivity, is continually traced. Thus by the canons of the council of Clermont, in 549, it is ordered, that the prisoners should be visited every Sunday by the Archdeacon, or some other minister of the Church, who must provide for their wants. St. Cæsarius, having sold even the ornaments and sacred vessels of the Church, in order to relieve the wants of the prisoners taken from the enemy, was accused of disloyalty to king Theodoric, who ordered him to be conducted to Ravenna; but he was so struck with his venerable air, that he immediately pronounced him innocent, and dismissed him, with a present of a silver basin, weighing sixty pounds, and 300 sols in gold. Cæsarius sold the basin, and with the money, according to his custom, redeemed several from captivity. The clergy, both regular and secular, of all cruelty the foes, were unremitting in alleviating the horrors of the feudal prison. "O, the great virtue of St. Fale," exclaims an ancient writer. A certain cruel man, in the reign of Childebert the Sixth, reproachful and insolent, proud and vicious, kept in prison a young man, who, indeed, deserved some punishment for his faults, but he punished him with much greater severity than justice required. The father, named Æmilian, ran, with tears in his eyes, to the saint, and begged his assistance. The man of God consoled him to the best of his power, and gave him the stick which he usually carried, desiring him to present it to the cruel lord, and to desire him, on his part, to set his poor young captive at liberty, and to pardon him." Such was the power of sanctity in those ages, that this tyrant, although he outraged, in consequence, his holy admonitor, was not the less obliged to

deliver the victim, whose rescue was ascribed to the prayers and intercession of the saint *." When Totila, king of the Lombards, moved by the fame of St. Benedict's sanctity, came to Monte-Casino to visit him, we only read of the interview, that the saint exhorted him to mercy. There is an anecdote related by St. Jonas, which is still more striking. While St. Columban was at Besançon, he was told, that the public prison was filled with condemned criminals. To them he hastened, to preach the word of God; but he also did them other service. Having made them promise that they would amend their lives, and sustain the canonical penance for their respective offences, he ordered their irons to be unloosed, and set them free. Such was the reverence in which he was held, that no one dreamed of opposing him. Having washed their feet, a common work of humility, he sent them to the cathedral, to assume the usual penance, and to mourn over their sins. The mercy of the Church is continually seen in action in behalf of prisoners. The first canon of the synod which was held at Ries in 1284, under Rostaguus II., Archbishop of Aix, commands prayers to be offered, for obtaining the liberty of Charles, Prince of Salerno, who was then in the prison of the Sicilians †; and there is extant a long and beautiful Latin poem, which was sent to Aigulfus, Archbishop of Bourges, in the ninth century, by Teudulfus, then in exile, praying, that by his prayers, and those of his brother bishops, he may be permitted to return to his country, from which he was banished, on suspicion of having been implicated in the conspiracy of Bernard, king of Italy, against his father, the emperor Lewis ‡. "The Roman Church," says St. Bernard, writing to the Milanese, "hath treated you as a mother. What ought she to do for you, and hath not done? If you asked that your fellow-citizens might be delivered from the chains of the Placentians, this has been done §." But still more remarkable is his letter to the Genoese, in which he says, "When I visited your city last year, each morning, noon, and night, I announced to you the word of God; and there was as much charity amongst the hearers, as

* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 117.
† Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 16. ‡ Id. i. 51.
§ Epist. cxxxi.

there was avidity of hearing. I went forth to sow the seed of peace, and the celerity with which I reaped fruit was truly wonderful; in one and the same day sowing and bringing back the sheafs with exultation; for this is the harvest which I reaped,—the return of exiles to their country; the deliverance of captives from chains and prisons, the glory of the Church, the joy of the world *." The Theodosian code ordains as follows:—"Let the judges personally inspect the prisoners who are to be brought before them every Sunday, and ask them whether, in consequence of corrupt gaolers, humanity hath been denied to them; nor let there be wanting the laudable care of the priests of the Christian religion to admonish the judges to the practice of this observance †. Concerning those who are imprisoned, we order the bishops of the place to visit them in their captivity on one day in every week; that is, on the fourth or sixth feria, and diligently to inquire the cause for which they are detained, and whether they are slaves or free men, whether they are confined for debts or for other charges, or for homicides, and to admonish the illustrious magistrates, as well those who are in this happy city, as those who are in the provinces, that those things may take their course which had been ordained by our constitution to the illustrious prefects, license being given to the bishops, if they should know of any negligence on the part of the illustrious magistrates, or of those who serve them officially, to declare it ‡."

This "laudable care of the priests" can be traced through all these ages. In the twelfth century we find the great Dominican, Robert Kilwarbi, archbishop of Canterbury, in the first year of his government visiting the prisoners, consoling and instructing the criminals, relieving the debtors, giving great alms to all, and restoring many to liberty. There is extant one of his letters, dated the 18th of May, 1273, in which he orders certain men in authority, to release from prison and to set wholly free many persons who were unjustly detained there, and he threatens them with canonical penalties if they neglect to comply §.

* Epist. cxxix. † Cod. Theodoc. lix. tit. iii. l. 7.

‡ Cod. Justin. i. tit. iv. l. 22.

§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 4.

We find that one of the first acts of the great and merciful pontiff, Benedict XIII., was to visit the prisons, and order that all prisoners, whatever might be their crime, were to be treated with humanity from the first to the last day of their confinement, and that the greatest attention should be paid to maintain cleanliness and salubrity. The Church, on all her great anniversaries, endeavoured that prisoners should partake of that common joy from which she says, "Let no one be excluded." At Rheims the two archdeacons, who were at all times to take care of the prisoners, were especially enjoined to visit them on the principal festivals *.

It was ordained by the consuls of Bologna, in the twelfth century, that during eight days before and as many after the festival of St. Petronio, debtors who chose to assist at the solemn office of the finding of his relics should be free from all molestation of creditors, and that their goods also should be protected during the interval †.

This was providing for a want that in the middle ages would have added greatly to the bitterness of a prison. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvais' work relates, that the son of a certain Norman noble who had been taken prisoner by the Sarassins, being in a deep dungeon, called to memory the great festival which his father used to celebrate in his chapel on the day of St. Nicholas, and began to weep at the recollection; and that when the Sarassins heard the cause, they scourged him cruelly. It is added, however, that he was miraculously delivered, and that after sleep he found himself in his father's chapel ‡.

In the year 1287, the Prince of Salerno, who was afterwards Charles II., King of Naples and Count of Provence, sent Raymond de Mevellion, Bishop of Gap, from Barcelona to Pope Martin IV. at Rome, to beg that his holiness would permit him to have mass and the divine office celebrated in his prison, notwithstanding the interdict under which Catalonia then lay—which petition was granted §. The extent to which mercy was

* Anquetil, Hist. de Reims, liv. i. 83.

† Sigonii, De Episcop. Bonon. liv. i.

‡ Speculum Morale, liv. iii. Pass. x. dis. 24.

§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 6.

exercised on the great festivals, by the state, would seem incredible if it were not so well attested. St. Eloy, in his Homily on Maunday Thursday, speaking of the mysteries of that day, adds, "Malefactors are pardoned, and the gates of prisons are opened, throughout the whole world." Though this general amnesty was subsequently restricted, it still continued to be a custom with the feudal princes to deliver two prisoners or to enfranchise two serfs on Christmas eve *. At Rome we find this practice continually prevailed. Thus Benedict XIII., at the Christmas solemnities, visited the prisons and ordered some prisoners to be set free, in honour of the mystery which has delivered all men from the captivity of the demon †. In Navarre, the viceroy and magistrates used to repair twice every year to the prisons, at Christmas, and eight days before Easter, and release as many prisoners as they pleased. Howard says, that in 1783 they released thirteen at Easter, and some years before they released all. Even where prison gates remained closed, it seems on these occasions to have been the desire of the civil authorities that the condition of captives should be somewhat alleviated. Roger de Breteuil, Count of Herfort, being convicted of treason against William the Conqueror, was condemned, according to the Norman laws, to pass the rest of his days in prison. Orderic Vitalis says, that "when the people of God were preparing to celebrate the festival of Easter, the king sent to the count in his prison a present of precious clothes, a mantle and tunic of silk, and a robe of precious skins and furs, which Roger threw into the fire to show his scorn of the king ‡." Such a present was only in accordance with the general practice of that time. When Duke Robert closely besieged the strong rock of Saint Severin, where Balalard had taken refuge, "it happened," saith the monk of Monte Cassino, "that the clothes of Balalard, through age, began to fall to pieces; and he besought Roger, the Duke's son, that on Easter-day he would supply him with what was necessary, for one should be clad in new cloth on a great festival; and the young man went to his father, and told him that Balalard asked for a robe; and the duke commanded

* Marchangy, Tristan le Voyageur, tom. iii. 132.
† Touron, tom. vi. ‡ Hist. Norm. lib. iv.

that there should be brought to him good cloth and proper, of different kinds, and he gave them to his dear son, and commanded him to present them to Balalard: and so it was done *."

Of the desire of comforting prisoners on the festivals, we can trace some faint vestiges in the use of certain poor formalities down to the worst times of the modern political despotisms. By the terms of the regulations for the interior economy of the Bastile in 1764, we find mention of three days every year on which an extraordinary allowance was made to the prisoners. On the festival of the Epiphany, as also on the feasts of St. Lewis and of St. Martin, there was to be half of a roasted fowl provided for each;—a great addition, no doubt, to their ordinary fare,

> "———— such as captives' tears
> Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
> Since man first pent his fellow men
> Like brutes within an iron den."

At Madrid, prisoners were treated with better fare on the three festivals of Christmas, Easter, and San Fernando. Howard remarked that at Leghorn, on the two great days of Easter, the prisoners were supplied with meat and rice, that the prison slaves at Civita Vecchia were supplied with beef and wine at Easter, Christmas, and during the carnival, and that in Austrian Flanders prison fare is better on all holy days. We have frequently had occasion to notice the acts of sovereign grace with which the celebration of the Christian festivals was accompanied. Speaking of the notorious adventurer, Gilles Baignart, Sieur de Juez in Normandy, the ancient writers say that he could never have obtained his pardon from the king, "not even on a Good Friday;" for on that day, when the Church prays that prison gates may open, the kings of France always delivered one prisoner convicted of unpardonable crimes, in memory of the pardon which Jesus Christ obtained for the human race. Power of this kind was not an exclusive ornament of the crown in ages of mercy. On the chief religious festivals, the laws or immemorial custom in many places conferred singular privileges on the clergy, and

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. vii. c. 19.

gave them the power of delivering a certain number of prisoners. Thus at Paris, on Palm Sunday, the clergy of Notre Dame used to deliver one captive from the prison of the Petit Chatelet, before which they made a station, who used then to follow them into the choir of the metropolitan Church *. At Rouen, to commemorate, as was supposed in later ages, a miracle wrought by St. Romain, his successor St. Ouen was said to have obtained a privilege of this kind from King Dagobert, which continued to be observed till the Revolution; in consequence of which, every year, on the festival of the Ascension, the canons of the Church of Rouen had the power of liberating a prisoner whom they chose amongst all those of the town whose confessions they had heard during the fifteen days preceding. The prisoner was delivered amidst the joyful sound of bells and organs and chaunt; while the clergy and all the confraternities, with lighted tapers, went in solemn procession, in honour of God, to the shrine of St. Romain. There the prisoner received absolution, while the people cried "Noel;" and then, having his head crowned with flowers, and his chains suspended from the reliquary, he supported the front of the bier which carried it, the rest being borne by others, who, during the last seven years, had been similarly delivered. In this manner they returned to the choir, where high mass was sung; during which, the prisoner went to each of the canons and asked forgiveness on his knees, who severally exhorted him to amend his life. After mass, he was conducted to the master of the fraternity of St. Romain, and magnificently entertained, served, and lodged. The next day, he heard a sermon in the chapter-house, and was admonished to return thanks to God; after which, he was dismissed, having promised to return every year during the space of seven years, to bear a taper at the procession. Taillepied describes this ceremony as observed in the reign of Henry III. †; but it is given in greater detail by Floquet; and I believe that no one can read his account, at least for the first time, without tears. What must have been the emotions of innumerable breasts, when the great bells

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. 4.

† F. Taillepied, Recueil des Antiquitez et Singularitez de Rouen, pp. 97—104.

of the cathedral and those of all the churches of Rouen announced, with a voice of thunder which could be heard for seven leagues round, that a prisoner was delivered in honour of the saint of God! "At the sound," says an ancient poem, "not alone the city, but every village within that compass, was filled with joy. The peasants drank their oldest wine, the citizens gave banquets to express their exultation at the mercy of God extended to the poor criminal. There was no one, however indigent, who had not his share of gladness at this great and exuberant manifestation of divine grace." What must have been felt by the spectators, when, at the close of the long and solemn train, the revered reliquary of St. Romain appeared borne in front by the prisoner, having the crown of white flowers on his head, who had no light burthen to sustain, though, as an old manuscript says, "There was no child of a good mother that did not lend a hand to help him." Now was a moment to proclaim again the mystery of our general deliverance; so when arrived in front of the cathedral, the archbishop and all the clergy fell upon their knees and sung aloud, "Tu rex gloriæ, Christe—tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem." Truly an impressive thing it was to consider what provision was made by these men of mercy to secure the recovery of this single soul. After the pontifical mass of the Ascension, he is conducted into the chapel of the confraternity, where mass is said especially for his intention, at which he makes an offering of his chains; and on the following day he is conducted processionally into the chapter-hall, where, in presence of all the canons and a multitude of other persons who are admitted, he kneels down and hears an allocution, in which is set forth the horror of his crime and the wondrous benignity of God in granting him space for repentance; and then, in a pathetic remonstrance, generally followed by a flood of tears, as old writers say, he is exhorted to live in future virtuously and Catholically, and to be ever grateful. Some were heard to say, after beholding the whole ceremony, that they would have preferred losing their heads to the privilege; but how merciful was the infliction, which recalled men to shame and justice by a solemnity so beautiful and so holy! Floquet proves that this privilege had only been gradually established, through reverence for the ascension of our Lord, and

in honour of the patron saint of the cathedral, whose triumph over Paganism had in latter times been mistaken for the destruction of a dragon, under which form the old error had been represented *. The grant of a prisoner under sentence of death, having been at first freely made by the dukes on the humble request of the canons, came to be considered in the end as a right; in defence of which, when occasion required, they never hesitated to oppose a passive resistance to the power, not alone of the local magistrates, but even of such a king as Louis XI., who, having intimated to them by letters, and by the chief justice of Rouen, that they should not grant the privilege, in 1472, to Stephen de Baudribosc, whom he was determined to judge according to his crime, received for answer, "that they would always endeavour to obey the king; that as for the choice of a prisoner, they would proceed to it according to God and their consciences." After making which reply, they chose the said Baudribosc, whom the king pursued with such bitterness.

By virtue of this privilege, no prisoner could be put to death until the canons had made their choice; and sometimes, when the magistrates attempted to evade this necessity, prisoners, as in the case of Robert d'Auberbosc, were rescued at the foot of the scaffold. If, at any time, the local authorities attempted to violate the privilege, the clergy proceeded in procession with the reliquary of St. Romain, which they deposited before the prison, where they remained night and day, regardless of any violence—for even their temporal possessions were sometimes seized in consequence—until the murmurs of the people induced the magistrates to respect the ancient custom.

In the year 1193, when Richard Cœur de Lion was in the dominions of the Duke of Austria, the Church of Rouen delivered no prisoner, as it was deemed indecorous to grant such grace while the royal crusader was in chains; but in the following year, lest mercy should have been a sufferer, the chapter obtained a prisoner, not alone for the present year, but also a second for the preceding. The same resolution that this work of mercy should not fail was evinced in 1563, when the canons

* Floquet, Hist. du Privilège de Saint Romain.

demanded two prisoners in consideration of their having been unable to deliver one the preceding year, when Rouen was possessed by the Calvinists, who then in the general sacrilege demolished the beauteous and inestimable reliquary, and committed to the flames the bones of God's confessor, in honour of whom, during perhaps more than seven centuries, so many had been rescued from the jaws of death. The formal recognition of the privilege as a right, is supposed to have been first obtained from Philippe Augustus, whose piety was disposed to favour the merciful disposition of the clergy, whom he loved so greatly, that according to an ancient document, "the Church of the malignant used to call him the king of priests*." Louis XII. confirmed the privilege, as "tending wholly to the praise of God, and to the utility of poor prisoners in peril of death, which, as the edict states, is a work of pity and mercy worthy of great recommendation, and of the very Christian king, zealous in the Catholic faith and in defence of the Churches."

The prisoners who had been delivered in this manner were in future eligible to all offices, as if they had never committed the crime; and it was even considered an injury to the Church, if any one dared to trouble or stigmatize them on account of it. Neither were they, at first, amenable for other crimes previously committed, though unavowed at the time; so that the delivered prisoner, however great a criminal, after he had raised the reliquary of St. Romain, became a new man, re-established in reputation, and irreproachable; but this extension of the privilege, signified by the crown of flowers placed upon his head at the moment of absolution, which Floquet condemns as exorbitant, seems to have been essential to its utility; for, without it, there could not have been the same probability of effecting a moral as well as a physical emancipation. The abuses to which the privilege gave rise were easily separable from the institution itself, as long experience bore witness before the decline of faith consequent upon the religious wars, when it became subservient to other purposes, as the illustrious magistrates who loved it complained. Even, however, in those latter times, it often well merited the

* Necrologe de l'Eglise du Mans, ap. Floquet, i. 70.

affection of the merciful. In 1598, it obtained pardon for a whole village, when Peter Maillard bore the reliquary, securing thus forgiveness for himself and all his accomplices, being the unhappy peasants who had joined the revolt of the Gauthiers nine years before. In 1644, Rouen beheld a still more affecting spectacle. Two years preceding, the parishioners of Tronquay, a neighbouring village, had been barbarously outraged by a troop of soldiers, some of whom, with their captain, being slain by the peasants in their own defence, the privy council took cognizance of the affair: and as there was nothing for them to expect but vengeance, the poor villagers fled into the woods, leaving their children to beg their bread. After being hunted like beasts of prey during two years, these unhappy men turned their eyes to the Church of Rouen, and resolved to have recourse to the privilege of St. Romain. Sixteen of them surrendered themselves. The noble relatives of the deceased captain left nothing undone to prevent their receiving the benefit; but in spite of all their efforts, notwithstanding the persuasions of the Duc de Longueville, and though the queen and the young king Louis XIV. wrote to the canons to threaten them, the sixteen prisoners were delivered, and consequently their accomplices—that is, the whole village—became exempt from further persecution. Indeed Bouthillier, the avocat of the parliament, who attacked the privilege, complained that amongst all the prisoners whom it had delivered from the time of Louis XII. there were but few gentlemen, the rest being persons of the lowest rank;—incidental notice of which fact occurs in documents relative to the confraternity of St. Romain, where it is said that the brethren were often obliged to give an entire new suit of clothes to the criminal, who was often in such a state of indigence that he could not appear decently in the procession *.

Nor was the Church of Rouen singular in the enjoyment of this privilege. The Bishop of Geneva had the right of delivering whom he would, even after capital condemnation †. The Bishop of Laon, on the day of his taking possession, could give an amnesty to all persons

* Défense pour le Privilège, par Dadre, ap. Floquet.

† Arnisæus, de jure Majestatis, ii. 3, ap. Floquet.

in exile *. The Church of Vendome delivered a prisoner every year, on the day of St. Lazarus, in execution of a vow of Louis de Bourbon, Count of Vendome, who on that day in 1448 was delivered from an English prison †. The archbishop of Embrun enjoyed, for a long time, the right of pardon. At Rheims, also, when the archbishop made his first entry, it was a day of grace. The prisons were opened to all, excepting murderers and criminals exposed to capital punishment; and all persons who had been banished returned to the city ‡. The privilege enjoyed by the Bishop of Orleans, which was without any modification, extending to the deliverance of all prisoners, was traced from the fifth century, when St. Agnan's holy prayers were believed to have delivered Orleans from Attila, who had besieged it. When the new bishop arrived within a short distance from the city, all the prisoners were led before him, who then threw themselves on their knees, crying mercy. After this supplication, they rose and walked in the procession, two by two, with a rope round their necks. On entering the church, they heard mass in the chapel of St. Yves; and in the evening, being assembled in the court of the bishop's palace, the prelate addressed them from a window, exhorting them to make amends, by voluntary penances, for the remission of the punishment which was due to their crimes. Then they all knelt down and received his benediction; after which, dinner was provided for them, and each might depart whither he pleased. In latter times, most of these privileges were restrained or abolished. Such monarchs as Louis XV. were assured by lawyers and parliaments that the power of extending mercy should be confined to the crown, and the suppression of these privileges was termed by Bouchel, "cutting the wings of those who wished to fly aloft." A few years later, the right of pardon was taken even from the king, as being inconsistent with the new order of things. But a history of manners in ages of faith leads us not on such ground.

Let us return. Prisoners were often set free, in order

* Devisme, Hist. de Laon, i. ap. Id.
† Jousse, Traité de la Justice Crim. ii. ap. Id.
‡ Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. iii. 4.

to testify respect and affection on the arrival of some eminent servant of God. This was the case so lately as in 1647, when Thomas Turco, general of the Dominicans, passed into Spain to make the visitation of his order; for he no sooner arrived on the domain of Don Gaspar Alphonso Perez de Guzman, Duke of Medina Sidonia, than this grandee ordered all the magistrates and governors of places to go out eight leagues to meet him, and not only to present him with the keys of cities and castles, but also to open the prisons, and at his own expense to pay the debts of every prisoner, in order to mark his veneration for a successor of St. Dominick of Guzman *.

This mode of evincing respect for the servants of God was very common in earlier times. The holy hermit Leonard, in the sixth century, who inhabited a cell in the forest of Pauvain, at four leagues distance from Limoges, had been a nobleman in great repute at the court of King Clovis I., and converted by St. Remi, after the battle of Tolbiac. Before retiring into the desert, he had evinced great charity towards prisoners, for whose consolation and instruction he exerted himself with indefatigable zeal; and when his sanctity became known, on his embracing a religious life, the king by an especial privilege granted him the power, on certain occasions, of setting prisoners at liberty. To the efficacy of his prayers multitudes in all parts of the world ascribed their deliverance from bonds. In the thirteenth century, we find that his festival was a day of obligation in England. One of the most celebrated instances was the escape of Martel Sire de Bacqueville, in the fourteenth century, from the dungeon of the Turks, on the day which was to have witnessed his death. It is said that the irons were still on his feet and hands when he found himself at the skirts of the forest of Bacqueville. He hastened to testify his gratitude, by building a chapel in his castle, under the invocation of the saint to whose prayers he ascribed his deliverance; in commemoration of which there was a solemn procession every year, on the first Sunday of November. The reliquary which contained

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. v. liv. 36.

his bones, in the collegiate church of Varzi, represented the prison of the Bastile at Paris.

Travellers in the sixteenth century relate, that in the beautiful church of the convent of St. Leonard, near Blondo Ferensuola, in Apulia, belonging to the Teutonic knights of Prussia, there were suspended on the walls an incredible number of irons, chains, manacles for the arms and feet, and collars, which had been placed there as votive offerings by those who ascribed their escape from the galleys or dungeons of the infidels, and also their deliverance from prison in Christian countries, to the merciful prayers of that saint *.

In general we find that the clergy took every occasion to impress upon the civil power the duty of mercy to prisoners. Their deliverance was termed, in canon law, causa maximè pia; so that the intervention of a festival presented no obstacle to pursuing it according to judiciary forms †.

In the seventh century, St. Leu, Archbishop of Sens, by the calumny of some envious persons, had incurred the anger of King Clotaire, and was sent into banishment, contrary to the form of ecclesiastical rights. His archdeacon hastened to find St. Vinebauld, and besought him to assist the Church of Sens in this misfortune. The holy man set out from Troyes immediately, and passing by Paris, arrived at Rouen about the hour of vespers. It was too late for him to enter the city that night, so he ordered his tent to be pitched, and then he received a crowd of devout poor people who were drawn by the fame of his sanctity. The next day he was admitted to the king, who received him as if he had been an angel; but the saint freely remonstrated with him on the folly and crime of banishing a holy bishop who prayed every day for the prosperity of his kingdom, and reminded him that the kings his predecessors had always respected bishops. The king yielded in every thing, and desired him to dispose of the affair as he wished. St. Vinebauld then obtained the deliverance of all the prisoners in the city, who were set free at his request, in order to honour God the more, and to draw down a blessing on the crown

* Leandri Alberti Descript. Italiæ, 334.

† Novarii Tractat. de Privileg. Miserab. Person. 106.

of France. The saint then returned to Paris, whence he conducted St. Leu back to Sens. The people of the city came out in a body to receive their archbishop and his angelic deliverer, who entered amidst the joyful peal of bells and melodious chaunts, while fires shone on all sides. After singing Te Deum in the cathedral, St. Vinebauld took leave of the archbishop, and set out on his return to Troyes*. There were cases, however, when the influence of the local clergy could effect but little towards obtaining mercy for a prisoner; and on these occasions it was to Rome that illustrious captives during the middle ages were naturally directed to look, in hopes of exciting an effective commiseration.

The Emperor Henry III. having taken the kingdom of Sicily from William, who had succeeded to the throne on the death of his father, King Tancred, had carried him prisoner into Germany, along with his mother and sisters, where the young prince, after five years, died in captivity in the castle of Ems, in the diocese of Coire in Switzerland. "Despairing of transitory things, as report went," says Otto of St. Blaise, "he sought eternal, breathing after those joys in heaven which he could not find on earth; for, being debarred from active pursuits, he studied by constraint contemplative things, and, I trust, meritoriously." The mother and her three daughters, Constantia, Alexia, and Mardonia, were imprisoned in the convent of Homburg in Alsace; and two nephews of her husband were doomed to perpetual imprisonment in the gloomy fortress of Trifels, from which, as an old writer says, no one ever went out who had entered it in chains. "Nullus exivit, qui vinctus ibidem intravit†." The darkest scenes of this tragedy were over before the death of Pope Celestin; but Innocent III., immediately after his election, sent the Abbot of St. Anastasius into Germany to procure the deliverance of these and other Italian captives, whom Philip Duke of Suabia still kept in prison; threatening that, unless they were released, he would subject all Germany to an ecclesiastical interdict. "You will convey," says the pontiff, "to our venerable brethren all the archbishops, and to our beloved sons the noblemen, marquesses, dukes, barons, and

* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troye, 143.

† Rad. de Dicet. ap. Hurter.

other princes of Germany, our mandates that our dear daughter in Christ, the noble woman Sibilia, her son and her daughters, and others of the kingdom of Sicily, who are imprisoned in Germany, may be delivered from their bonds and sent to us free, without excuse or delay; and if these our mandates be not obeyed, you will pronounce sentence of excommunication against them, and place all their dominions under an interdict, until these prisoners shall be restored to liberty *." The result of this mandate was the deliverance of the Archbishop of Salerno and his brethren, as also the release of Sibilia, the widow of King Tancred, with her daughters, who, on thus escaping from prison, fled into France, where the eldest was soon after married to Count Walter, a noble and magnanimous knight, who, by intervention of the Pope, procured the principality of Tarentum for his wife, according to the original agreement of the late emperor †. The Viscount of Castle Ayrard and some other Paladins, on their return from the Holy Land, were detained as prisoners at Cremona; on which occasion Innocent wrote to the Emperor Otho, reminding him how he had been taught to detest a similar outrage when it was perpetrated against his uncle Richard, of illustrious memory, King of England; and bidding him tremble lest he should commit a crime which he had condemned in another, to whose seat, and not to whose wickedness, it is to be hoped, he has succeeded. At the same time, he addresses letters to the bishop of that see, and to other prelates in whose dioceses the pilgrims returning from beyond sea may be detained prisoners, charging them to procure their instant liberation and permission to proceed, with all their effects, in peace; or in the event of not succeeding, to publish a sentence of interdict and excommunication against the states and persons implicated ‡.

When Philip, king of France, attempted to have his recent marriage with Ingeburg, sister of Canute, king of Denmark, dissolved, that unhappy young princess, most beautiful and holy *, being present in the assembly, and not understanding the French, was told by an interpreter,

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. i. 26. † Gesta Innocentii III. 22.
‡ Epist. Inn. III. liv. xii. 77.
* Rigord. 37. Vinc. Bellov. Spec. xxix. 55.

that a sentence of divorce was about to be pronounced; upon which, she could only utter these few words, weeping, "Mala Francia, mala Francia—Roma, Roma." The king immediately banished her from the kingdom, and caused her to be placed in a certain convent, whence she was afterwards removed to confinement in one of his palaces. All who feared God, and loved justice, turned their eyes now to the apostolic seat, then occupied by Celestin, who immediately declared null and void the Gallican sentence against the helpless, unprotected woman. Innocent III., who soon succeeded, acted with memorable vigour on this occasion; and though he could not induce the king to love her, yet he never ceased labouring to make him honour her. He sent her consoling letters, and caused her to be visited by his own nuncios, endeavouring to afford her some solace *." The cry of the miserable and oppressed, throughout all these ages, was that of poor Ingeburg,—"Roma, Roma!" And in this respect, the holy see appears, in history, invested with such a sublime grandeur, that a mere remembrance of it, suddenly presented to the mind, is sufficient to fill the eyes with tears. Lo! that island castle in Lochlieven, which has received under its gloomy battlements, another captive queen;—lo! Fotheringay, and the place where thou hadst need to arm thy heart with strength;—how frozen and how faint became those who loved her, ask me not, reader; for I write it not. Think thyself, if lively fancy work in thee at all, how they did feel.

> O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
> Had sorrow fix'd what time could ne'er erase:
> The tender blue of that large loving eye
> Grew frozen with its gaze in vacancy.

Yet hath she one great consolation in all the horrors of her prison;—the knowledge that she is the object of the chief Shepherd's tenderest solicitude;—the knowledge that the fifth Pius meditates on her sorrows, and seeks her deliverance, with all the ardour of his soul. In fact, all that a vicar of Christ on earth could do to rescue such a victim, this holy pontiff did. He commanded public prayers, to obtain the suffrage of the faithful; he prayed for her in secret; he wrote, in her behalf, to all

* Id. 55.

Christian kings and princes; he tried to send experienced persons into Scotland, with great sums of money; and, again, after her escape and defeat, when falling into Elizabeth's hands, she was consigned to another prison, he wrote letters of consolation to her, which, even at this distance of time, cannot be read without tears. In reply to her generous promise to hold fast her faith, his strain is all seraphic: he congratulates her on being permitted by the divine Saviour to suffer for sake of justice, adding, that he feels assured the holy love of God, whose sweetness surpasses all the joys of earth, will wholly take away the bitterness of her captivity *. The same pontiff exerted his efforts to procure the deliverance of Don Carlos. He wrote to Philip II., imploring him to change his resolution, representing to him the fatal consequences that would result from keeping his son in prison, the stain that he would inflict on his own reputation among all nations of the earth, the murmurs that would assail him from his subjects, who would regard him as an unnatural father, and as a king careless of the future interests of his people, by destroying the hereditary prince who was one day to govern them †. That the horror of the result was enhanced by the circumstance of Philip having been always faithful to the Church, may be inferred from the fact, that the emperor Frederick II., who made his eldest son, Prince Henry, die in prison, for having blamed his conduct with too much freedom, is always extolled, by modern historians, as the model of a great king, which proves their conviction, that such an act does not impart an equally determinative stamp on the character of a declared enemy of the holy see.

But now, methinks, I mark impatience on my reader's brow; for I have held him long in parlance, in outward courts and chambers, that still received day's cheerful beams, and he, perhaps, is one of those who love to penetrate into the recesses of old castles, and to amuse their imagination by assigning uses to most unaccountable collections of arches, vaults, and passages; and if the light should fail, and all sound but the distant moaning of a wind through some hollow stones, so much the better. Well, it is true, we cannot tell of mercy without

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv.

† Id. iv. liv. 28.

having been led through many scenes that would be fitting in romance, and constrained to witness sad, appalling trace of the cruelty and malice of the human heart. We must penetrate into these dungeons, deep and old, whose massive columns are dim with a dull, imprisoned ray, and where, at times, perhaps, our guide will tell us, that we must take leave of all light but what a torch can give.

The monk of Monte Cassino describes the prisons of Gisolf, the ferocious prince of Salerno, who surpassed Nero in cruelty, commanding pirate vessels on sea, and troops of banditti on land, by means of which he used to cast men into dungeons, where they were half starved, and scourged and mutilated, until they paid a great sum for their ransom; and no cruelty was ever like this; and some died in prison through fear, and other tribulation; for in a narrow place he kept sometimes forty together, and his servants used to bury the dead by night, secretly; and those who died by torments, were said to have caused their own death: and during Lent, he would eat no other food but the hands, and feet, and ears of his prisoners, and being contrary to all the virtue of God, he caused the feet of twelve citizens of Amalphi to be cut off in his presence, as he sat at supper on the day when St. Peter was delivered from prison by the angel; and no marvel that he would not honour St. Peter, when he ceased not to afflict the miserable on Maunday Thursday, when Christ supped with his apostles. At one time, some Pisans, having been saved from perishing in a storm at sea, by invoking the prayers of St. Matthew, of Salerno, being afterwards anxious to visit the holy shrine in that city, through gratitude, besought a safe conduct from Gisolf, and permission to enter Salerno for that purpose. The prince granted it, and promised favours. The Pisans entered the port, disembarked, went barefoot to the Church of St. Matthew, gave a rich pall to the altar, lighted innumerable tapers, and then returned to the port, but they could not find their ship; for Gisolf had seized it. The rich were then thrown into his prisons, while the poor were suffered to depart in quest of ransom for the others, not one of whom obtained his liberty without a great price: and Gisolf, seeing his treasure increase, was filled with worldly joy, and it seemed to him that he was no longer a mortal man, but a god. Now there was in the city of Amalphi a noble man, called Maurus, to whom Almighty God

gave riches, and six sons; the eldest of whom was named Panthelo, who was every day before God, and who at Salerno, gave great alms to those who were going to the holy sepulchre of Jerusalem, received them into his house, and enabled them to accomplish the voyage they had undertaken; and he had built a hospital at Antioch, and at Jerusalem, which he supported with his riches, so that his renown spread throughout the world; and not only those who knew him, but those who knew him not, spoke of his goodness. And when Gisolf was going to the emperor of Constantinople, he and all his people were lodged and entertained by Panthelo in his house; and while Gisolf was in his house, he began to consider how he might possess himself of Panthelo's riches. So, on returning to Salerno, he pretended great friendship for Maurus, the father, and for all his sons, and promised to repay them for all their kindness. At this time, Gisolf hated and persecuted the people of Amalphi; but by commandment of the pope, he had promised Maurus, who was now a monk, that if any of his sons should fall into his hands, he would dismiss them safe and sound, without ransom. Shortly after, in a battle at sea, one of his sons, John, was slain, and another son, called Maurus, was taken prisoner. At first, Gisolf treated him with honour, and made him eat with him, and invited him to play at tables with him; and then he began to think how he could get money from him. So, through great avarice, he had him seized at table, and put into a prison-room, and afterwards into a dark place under the rock, and put divers irons upon him, and tortured him; and then demanded from Panthelo, his brother, 30,000 besants, but the brother could not pay more than 10,000, for he had no more. Finally, the empress Agnez came to his aid, a woman most Christian and devout, all whose care was in works of mercy in prisons, and in comforting the poor, and in adorning the Churches. So she came to Salerno, and threw herself at the prince's feet, and promised to pay one hundred pounds of gold, and cut off her own finger, if she could only deliver this Maurus. And at another time, there came all the college of St. Benedict to deliver him, and to pray for him. The empress was despised by the prince, and her prayer was void before the face of the tyrant, who feared not the judgment of God, nor the shame of mankind. At first, he caused

his right eye to be put out; and then, day by day, he had his fingers and toes cut off, and by torments he made weak the just man; and it being the winter season, he plunged him into vinegar and ice, and after this martyrdom, Maurus was drowned in the sea, and passed to Jesus Christ *. This is the first prison; and we have paused long enough to feel its dismal horrors. The glimpse of angels amidst such execrable gloom, is one of the miraculous scenes which the history of the middle ages furnishes, in proof of our position, that supernatural mercy was ever near. Here is the second; and again a vault opens before us, that strikes, with damp and cold, both body and soul. In the year 1599, there is cast into the prison of Naples, by order of the Viceroy, another illustrious victim, for whose deliverance the sovereign pontiffs must maintain an earnest, and, during a long period, ineffectual struggle. This prisoner, whose captivity commences when he is only in his thirty-first year, and who is doomed to grow old in dungeons and torments, is a Dominican friar of Calabria, named Thomas Campanella. Hear how he speaks of himself in a book, which the horrors of his prison have not prevented him from composing, against Atheists, and which sees the light in 1608, through the liberality of a friend, who publishes it in Germany.—"I have been made to change my prison already fifty times. I have been applied to the question on seven different occasions, and on the last I was made to suffer during forty hours, and I think I must have lost ten pounds of blood. It pleased the Lord to preserve me, and to cure me after six months; but I was hardly cured, when I was thrown into a pit, whence I have been only drawn to undergo examinations. They accused me of being a demoniac and magician; of having made the book entitled the Three Impostors, which was known thirty years before I was born; of following the opinion of Democritus, though I have written against him; of being disaffected to the government of the Church, though, in my book on Christian Monarchy, I have proved, that no philosopher has ever formed the idea of a republic more perfect than that of the prince of the apostles, established at Rome. Lastly, they would make me out a heretic, though, in a known dialogue, I

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. viii. c. 4.

have expressly combated all the heresies of our time. On these charges, I have been again thrown into the obscure pit, where I have neither air nor light." This relation is very remarkable, as showing the hypocrisy of the civil power in pretending to punish men for offences against religion, when the real cause of displeasure was solely political; for Touron has shown, that Campanella was arrested merely in consequence of his too great readiness to declare his political opinions, at a time which was very critical for the kingdom of Naples. Gabriel Naudeé remarked also, that having his head filled with all the astrological observations of the Chaldæans, Egyptians, Greeks, and Arabs, he had looked higher for the origin of all the disorders of that time, and that he was denounced to the Viceroy as if he had not simply predicted changes, but had conspired to effect them. After the first period of his confinement, he was permitted, however, to write and to see his friends; many of whom visited him from distant countries. Meanwhile, the children of mercy were not remiss. The superior of the Dominicans, many grandees of Spain, and the Pope Clement VIII., exerted all their efforts, with Philip III., to procure his deliverance. Pope Paul V. sent Sciopius to Naples for the same purpose; but all was in vain. At length, in 1615, Don Pedro Giron, duke of Ossona, being made Viceroy, the prisoner's condition was much ameliorated. The new Viceroy used to visit him, and consult with him as a friend; and would certainly have soon delivered him, had he not himself fallen into disgrace with the court of Madrid, and been obliged to return to Spain, where he was imprisoned in the castle of Almida, which he never left till his death. This event dispelled the hopes of Campanella; yet, being ever anxious to sanctify his sufferings, he consoled himself with reflections on the advantages arising from his captivity, declaring, that in chains and solitude, he acquired greater knowledge than he could have obtained in the society of the learned; for, being deprived of the view of this corporal world, and, as it were, buried among those who persecute him, "my mind," he says, "struck deeper root, and rose with less distraction towards Him who is called the Father of light, and the Lord of wisdom." It was reserved for Pope Urban VIII. to effect his deliverance. Innocent Maxime, bishop of Catana, and Seraphin Rinaldi, bishop

of Motala, in Apulia, being both in great credit with Philip IV., were employed by his holiness; and at their earnest solicitations, the king sent orders, in 1626, to the duke of Alba, viceroy of Naples, to set the prisoner at liberty, and declare him innocent of high treason, of which he had been accused. Nevertheless, the Pope had only been able to extricate him by pretending that, since he was accused of errors in his books, it was to Rome that he ought to be sent, to render account before the inquisition. Thither, accordingly, he proceeded immediately, and on his arrival, constituted himself prisoner of the holy office; but with an understanding, that this was merely an act to colour the pretext which had been used for procuring his deliverance, and that he should have every liberty that could be desired, being prisoner only in name. After some time, Pope Urban VIII. ordered all his papers to be given up to him, assigned him a pension, and showed him so many marks of tender affection, that Gabriel Naudeé took occasion to pronounce a public discourse in praise of his holiness, in which he returned him solemn thanks, in the name of the whole scientific world. These favours awakened the jealousy of the Spanish government. It is true, Campanella was only employed in writing books of science, metaphysics, and theology: he could even think of the sorrows of others, and in his tragedy of Mary Queen of Scots, and diverse elegies on the calamities of his friends, gave proof how deeply he could feel for all who had been, like himself, unhappy. But he received warning that he was not in security. The Pope and the Romans had nearly lost all hopes of saving him, when, as he says himself, the very Christian king, the perpetual defender of the holy Church, contrived, by means of his ambassador, the Count de Noailles, to secure his escape into France, where he was mercifully received by bishops, and men of learning; Peiresc, counsellor of the parliament of Provence, entertaining him, for many months, in his house at Aix, and defraying the expense of his journey to Paris, where he ended his days in peace, in the dominican convent in the street of St. Honoré.

Compassion for prisoners, and heroic self-devotion to obtain their deliverance, characterized men, however, of all orders in the society of the middle ages. Provenzano Salvani humbled himself so far for the sake of one of his

friends, who was detained in captivity by Charles I. of Sicily, as personally to supplicate the people of Sienna to contribute the sum required by the king for his ransom. This act of self-abasement is represented by Dante as having atoned for his general ambition; for on finding him in the lesser torments which purify the proud, he inquires from Oderigi how chanced so presumptuous spirit to gain admittance there; who replies,

> When at his glory's topmost height,
> Respect of dignity all cast aside,
> Freely he fix'd him on Sienna's plain,
> A suitor to redeem his suff'ring friend
> Who languish'd in the prison-house of Charles;
> Nor for his sake, refused through every vein
> To tremble.————————
> This is the work that from these limits freed him *.

Adalbert, duke of Lorraine, chancellor of Henry V., and archbishop of Mayence, was accused of disaffection to that emperor in 1112, and thrown into prison, where, as Otho of Frisingen relates, he suffered various torments, and was left without food for an almost incredible time †. He finally owed his freedom to the heroic charity of Bruno, archbishop of Cologne, who gave himself up to Henry as a pledge in his stead. That many other persons, however, evinced blessed mercy towards him in his calamity, appears from the following diploma, which he published soon after his deliverance in 1135, conferring privileges on many citizens of Mayence, in consideration of what they had suffered to serve him.—"Let posterity learn from my fall," saith the prelate, "what danger and sudden ruin may attend prosperity. Henry V., as you know, after many benefits, merely on account of my obedience to the Roman Church, cast me into a dungeon. There I remained in darkness, bound for a long time, having for my sole consolation that saying of the chief Pastor, 'si quid patimini propter justitiam beati;' and those examples which I so often called to mind of Isaiah in captivity, and Daniel in the lions' den. Finally, by many tribulations, God from on high, visiting the contrite heart, moved the faithful citizens of Mayence to use their efforts to obtain my deliverance. At length,

* Purg. xi. † Chronic. lib. vii. c. 14.

therefore, clerks, counts, and freemen, with citizens, and they of the family of the said emperor, having yielded up pledges in my behalf, offering their dear sons and relations, received me, weakened in all my body, and scarcely half alive, as faithful children would receive a father; but in what manner the pledges were treated, no one can tell without horror; for some returned, having had limbs cut off, others by hunger perished, and others, in exile and nakedness, contracted diseases of which they died. These things the faithful citizens of Mayence suffered for justice. Considering, therefore, how I should recompense such mercy shown on me in captivity, it seemed right that I should confer something on them to conduce to their honour and utility. Therefore, with the advice of my council, I have conferred these privileges, confirming them with my seal *." The ransom of prisoners was a work which the blessed merciful were never slow to perform. After the sack of Rome by the imperial troops, we find the great cardinal Cajetan, who fell into their hands, borrowing money, in order to ransom not alone himself and his servants, but many poor citizens of Rome, who had been utter strangers to him before that day of adversity †. It must be remembered, also, that one duty which devolved upon nearly all the pious confraternities of the middle ages was the visitation of prisoners; so that under the worst circumstances, in the darkest, deepest dungeons of merciless despots, there was always an especial ground of probability of having some observer, to whom might be addressed the words which Dante heard in hell:—"O gracious creature and benign! who goest visiting through this element obscure us whom the world with bloody stain imbrued." Spenser describes the person whose especial office it was

> Poore prisoners to relieve with gratious ayd,
> And though they faulty were, yet well he wayd
> That God to us forgiveth every houre
> Much more than that, why they in bands were layd;
> And he, that harrowd hell with heavie stowre,
> The faulty soules from thence brought to his heavenly bowre ‡.

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 355.
† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 25.
‡ Faery Queen, i. 10.

That the visitation of prisoners formed a most important part of the offices of mercy, a captive in our age, from whose memoirs I have already quoted, can tell us from experience.—"One person of distinction, who came to visit us in prison," says Silvio Pellico, "was a man of fifty or sixty years, who evinced, in his manners and in his words, the most noble compassion. He could do nothing for us; but the sweet expression of his goodness was a benefit, and we were grateful for it. O, what a desire has the prisoner to see creatures of his species. The Christian religion, which is so rich in humanity, has not omitted to announce, as among the works of mercy, the visiting of prisoners. The sight of men who grieve for your misfortunes, even though they may not be able to relieve you more efficaciously, is a great consolation *." Howard made the remark, that there is no country where religion dispenses so much succour to persons under confinement as Italy. "Everywhere," he says, "there are institutions of mercy; and, in most cities, pious confraternities, whose members are exclusively occupied in consoling prisoners." The monks and friars persuaded the laity to form associations for this purpose. Thus, in 1577, we find brother Archangelo, of Palermo, founding a confraternity to supply necessaries to prisoners †. The noble fraternity of St. Basil, at Messana, was originally founded for the same object ‡. At Venice, Howard found a society of a similar kind; the rules of which were printed. In Catana, the mere circumstance of a fraternity having its oratory in the Church of the prison of St. Agatha, would be enough to indicate what compassion prisoners might expect to find. In fact, such was the zeal to serve them, that it occasioned a contention between two of the confraternities of mercy in that city. The brethren of the White, who are exclusively nobles, and those of St. John the Baptist, both claimed the office of assisting criminals condemned to death. The painful duty, which was the object of so much emulation, was finally assigned to the noble brotherhood, whose oratory

* Le mie Prigioni, cap. 84.

† Annales Capucinorum.

‡ Bonfilii Messanæ Descript. lib. iv. in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. tom. x.

was in the Church of St. Catharine *. In 1519, the confraternity of the White was instituted at Naples by Calistus, of the order of regular canons of St. John Lateran, in the church of the Holy Trinity, near the royal palace; the members of which were appointed to console and exhort criminals under sentence of death. This fraternity was afterwards transferred to a chapel, of which the expressive title was Sancta Maria Succurre Miseris. Many noblemen were received into this pious association †. At Bologna, in the fourteenth century, the confraternity of St. Mary of Death, whose especial office was to tend the sick, took charge, also, of prisoners condemned to die; for whom they had a chapel, under the title of the Decollation of St. John, where they gave them decent burial ‡. In Florence, similarly, the brotherhood, styled Di St. Giovanni dei Fiorentini, not alone attends to the comfort of prisoners during life, and to their consolation at the moment of death, but, after receiving their last sighs, takes charge of their burial. On digging, lately, at Lyons, on the site of an ancient religious building, a great quantity of human skulls and bones were found, which were known to be those of criminals who had suffered capital punishment, whom the brethren of the order of Mercy had charitably buried in the vaults of their own chapel. The confraternity of this kind at Rome is described by Howard as consisting of seventy persons, nearly all whom are noble. When a prisoner is conducted to death, they attend him in a body, and afterwards provide for his burial in their cemetery.

The rigour of magistrates sometimes exercised towards the dead, furnished an occasion to call forth the compassion of the blessed merciful, of which Petrus Tudertinus, a holy Capuchin friar in the convent of Foligno, gave a remarkable example when the governor of the city had ordered the bodies of fourteen criminals to be suspended upon the gibbets, and left exposed to public view; for this friar, being moved to pity at the sad spectacle, and having obtained leave from his superior, went in the dead of night, and by means of a ladder of ropes which

* De Grossis Catanens. Decachord. ll. 15. in Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ x.

† Annales Capucinorum, an. 1542.

‡ Sigonii de Ep. Bonon. lib. iii.

he brought with him, succeeded in taking down the bodies, which, with the assistance of one companion, he removed and buried in holy ground so secretly, that the author was never discovered*. Indeed, that after death, criminals continued to be objects of compassion, is a fact attested by many ancient documents; as where we read that Marguerite Mousset, wife of Jacques Aubert, maitre d'hotel of the ladies of honour of the court of France, moved with pity and charity for poor deserted souls, and particularly for those of persons executed, founded, in 1658, in the church of St. Jacques de la Boucherie, a daily mass to be said for their intention†.

In Portugal there are similar confraternities. In most prisons of that kingdom the prisoners are supported by the charity of the public. Justice there is not severe, but it is slow. Even after prisoners have been tried and condemned, they often remain some years in prison before the sentence is executed. Before the administration of the Marquis de Pombal, the gaolers used to let them go out upon their word of honour. One culprit enjoyed this favour during seven years, though he had been condemned to death; and when the order came for his execution, on the mere summons of the gaoler, the culprit, who was working in the provinces, without hesitating an instant, returned to his prison; and this respect for his promise moved the authorities to pardon him.

Howard observes, that at Paris there was a charitable society, founded by the Abbé Breton, to supply prisoners every week with clean linen. The poor prisoners in the tower of the old castle, on the heights at Bonneville, in Savoy, experienced a similar relief from a sisterhood of charitable ladies. A stranger who had been imprisoned in the Bastile founded a library there, from which the unhappy captives might be supplied with books. With the exception of that state fortress, every prison in Paris possessed a lady protectress, who collected alms from the rich, and distributed them among the prisoners, and at her own expense, supplied them with soup twice each week, and meat once in fifteen days. By a royal ordinance, charitable persons who desired to give alms might

* Annales Capucinorum, 1540.

† Lebœuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. i. 9.

penetrate into every prison, and, in the presence of the gaoler, the closest dungeons were opened to them. In the council chamber of the prison at Bruges was a picture, representing a man delivering some prisoners, and a list was shown there of all the alms that had been given from the year 1315 to 1734.

"Prisoners are to be visited," says the continuator of Vincent de Beauvais' Mirror; "in compliance with the Sacred Scriptures; they are to be consoled, redeemed, and delivered. Mementote vinctorum tanquam simul vincti. They are to be visited after the example of Christ, who descended into hell, whence he led out the conquered in strength. For this end he chose to be captive, that he might deliver the captives—to be bound, that he might loose those that were bound—to be sold, that he might redeem those that were in bondage—to be slain, and to descend into hell, that he might free his own from death and from the infernal prison. To this the example of the angels exciteth us, who visited Daniel in the lions' den, Peter in the prison, Agnes, Vincent, Catherine, and many other saints, in dungeons. To this the example of living saints inviteth us, of whom the apostle saith, "Vinctis compassi fuistis." It is delightful to trace this tradition of mercy through the obscure night of time, and amidst the dark annals which recount the reigns of a Clotaire and a Dagobert, to hear St. Ouen's exclamation, "Where was there a prisoner whom Eligius did not visit and console?" When St. Dominick was at Rome, he used every day, after the office, to go round the walls and preach salvation to the prisoners wherever they were confined *. Those who were expiating part of their crimes in dungeons, or whom the hardness of creditors retained in obscure prisons, found in this man of mercy a consoler, a friend, an intercessor, and sometimes a deliverer. There was hardly a day that he did not enter into these sombre places, to alleviate by words of consolation, or by real effects, the pains of these sad victims of the justice of men, or to teach them to sanctify their crosses by submission to the order of Providence †.

* Speculum Morale, lib. iii. p. x. dis. 24.

† Touron, vie de S. D. lib. ii. c. 6.

The young Ambrose, of the illustrious family of Sansedoni, at Sienna, is described as going, on certain days every week, to visit the prisoners who were confined in that city *. Afterwards, when appointed legate of the holy see in Tuscany, we find him establishing pious confraternities, the members of which were especially bound to visit and console the afflicted spirits in prison. Cardinal Orsini, archbishop of Beneventum, used to visit the prisons of that city, in order to console their unhappy inmates; and when raised to the supreme chair, as Benedict XIII., he continued to practise the same office of mercy. Berenger de Landon, general of the Dominicans, and archbishop of Campostello, used to pass, in like manner, as an angel of mercy, through the sad seats of woe †. Bartholomew de Carranza, archbishop of Toledo, the same who received the last sighs of Charles V. in the monastery of St. Just, was also in constant habits of visiting the prisons, to console the captives. He used to give alms to some, and procure liberty for others; and there were many who owed their deliverance to his having paid their debts. Prince Maurice, of Hungary, who became an eminent member of the same order in the fourteenth century, and who had himself suffered an imprisonment of six months in a tower, by command of Ladislas, governor of Buda, was another of these gracious creatures and benign, who went visiting in mercy through the obscure dungeons. When at Bologna, he used to intercede for the poor debtors; and he often succeeded in obtaining their liberty ‡. The blessed Ventura, of Bergamo, used also to prevail upon creditors to remit part of what was due to them, and to restore unhappy prisoners to their homes and family. When, in the year 1334, he traversed Italy at the head of 10,000 pilgrims, who bore a cross for their standard, on which mercy was one of the three words inscribed, their passage was marked every where by the deliverance of prisoners. At Milan, Cremona, Bologna, Sienna, Ferrara, and Rome, the prison doors were thrown open at the voice of these

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. v.

† Id. ii. liv. ix.

‡ Id. ii. liv. x.

men of blessed mercy*. If we visit the celebrated Ludovicus Sforza, in the obscure dungeon in which the King of France cast him, where his hair turned grey in one night, and where he was retained during the rest of his days, we find there merchants of Florence who had penetrated into it to visit the fallen prince, through charity, doubtless; yet in part, perhaps, to observe in trembling the rest that soothes his lot—to mark

> "How that lone and blighted bosom sears,
> The scathing thought of execrated years."

To them he used to say, that these calamities had all been often predicted to him when he was at the height of his prosperous fortune, by the friar Jerome Savonarola, whom he now at length recognized to have been a just man most foully calumniated. Sforza had been one of the chief instruments to effect the ruin of that great friar, by exciting him that sat in the supreme chair; and it is delightful to remark, that it is now a friar and vicar general of his order, Vincent Bandelli, who strains every nerve to obtain the deliverance of this prince, using for that purpose all his interest with Cardinal George d'Amboise, legate in France, and that it is another Dominican, the celebrated John Clerée, confessor of Louis XII., who co-operates with him to the same end, though the efforts of both prove ineffectual†.

To visit prisoners, the blessed merciful braved and sometimes incurred death. Many citizens of Verona were seized and executed by Eccelino, in consequence of their having visited the just man, Ugo of St. Juliana, whom that tyrant had deprived of his prætorial office and cast into prison, and who, it is said, deplored their fate far more than his own‡. Alexander de Lugo, an Italian Dominican, was cast into prison by the Turks, in the Isle of Chio, and told to prepare for death within three days, or else to embrace the law of Mahomet. The infidels, on conducting him to prison, after inflicting on him the bastinado, would not give him time to descend a staircase of twelve steps, but pushed him down into that obscure dungeon, where he was guarded with such

* Id. lib. xii.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xxiii.

‡ Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patav. lib. iii. 13.

severity that no friar or religious person could possibly be admitted to see him. Nevertheless a Catholic carpenter, known to the Turks on account of his skill in making furniture, contrived to penetrate into his prison to console the confessor with a few affectionate words. He found him in prayer, prostrate on the earth, and bathed in his blood; and the gaoler said that he had never ceased to pray since entering the prison *.

Reader, if thou canst dare to do it in imagination, after all that thou hast heard, descend with me now into the dungeons of the Bastille. Behold, in farthest gloom, a nameless and abandoned sufferer, imprisoned and asleep!—

> "He sleeps!—who o'er his placid slumber bends?
> His foes are gone, and here he hath no friends;
> Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?—
> No! 'tis an earthly form with heavenly face!"

This friar, who comes to minister here in tenderest pity, is Vincent Baron, the same who is so often seen going from his convent in the Fauxbourg St. Germain to the Bastille, and to other gaols, to visit prisoners. People are alarmed for him sometimes, and bid him beware; but he closes his eyes against all danger to himself, and only thinks of his duty of visiting and consoling afflicted persons, whose own dearest relatives durst not openly solicit the government in their favour †.

Now is the day departing, the air embrowned with shadows, and all animals on earth are from their toils released. The friar alone, or the member of some holy brotherhood, prepares himself the conflict to sustain both of sad pity and that disgustful way, through precincts full of gloom and horror, where man's vengeance or suspicion frowns. That wherever the Catholic religion remains, the same works of mercy which were required by the constitutions of the ancient confraternities are still performed, proof has been given in modern times, and while I was writing this history. A devout pilgrim of the Holy Land, better known to France as an historian of the crusades, has described his visiting that ancient castle of the counts of St. Pol, on the river Somme, cited occasionally in the annals of the middle ages, but which in our days has become memorable from having received

* Touron, tom v. 36.
† Id. tom. v. liv. xxxvii.

under the doom of perpetual imprisonment the ministers of Charles X. "On our first appearance in the town," he says, "I found that we were taken for persons who came to visit the prisoners, and I remarked that this served as a good recommendation. Every one replied to our questions with an affectionate interest. Although the prisoners can only be seen from a distance, on the platform of the castle, all the inhabitants of the town know them perfectly, and take a lively interest in their fate. They send them flowers to deck their prison walls, and the finest fruits of the markets are reserved for them. Pious persons cause masses to be celebrated, to obtain from God their deliverance; the poor follow with blessings those who are going to see them. They are visited not only by their relations, but by many other persons, who come from a great distance for the purpose. Some have travelled as far as two hundred leagues, for the sole object of passing an hour with one of these prisoners. I would gladly have visited all of them, but I had pledged my honour to confine my visit to the prince." Thus misfortune has its courtiers, wherever the Catholic religion exists; and each act of cruelty only presents a fresh field for the exercise of blessed mercy.

In the latter years of Gallican misrule, a young maiden named Sando, who made dresses for the court, was suspected of having facilitated certain communications with the members of the parliament exiled at Troyes, and on that charge was suddenly hurried off to the Bastille, where she fell sick and required an attendant. As she refused all service unless it was afforded by the presence of one of her attendants named Maugin, that young person was sent for; but on her arrival at the gates, the proper officer did not fail to remind her, that if she once entered within those walls, she could not again leave them, unless along with her mistress. Now bethink thee, reader, what cheer was hers at sound of those stern words, and at the aspect of those towers, darker still, those draw-bridges, and narrow apertures, through which the faint expiring beam of day descended to the dungeon deep below! She might well believe she never would return. Nathless in this extreme, her mercy failed her not. "Only grant me the pleasure," said she, "to embrace my young mistress. I will remain with her as long as you please—twenty years, if it must be so." She

had to remain, however, but three months and twenty days.

In short, not to multiply these instances further, wherever the traditionary manners of faith prevailed, there were some persons endued with mercy from heaven to a degree wholly supernatural, whose appearance was always simultaneous with scenes of extraordinary horror. In shades most pestilential, the medicinal grew near the poisonous herb; while over the general surface, mercy expanded its enchanting blossoms in profuse abundance, and characterized the soil.

Howard complained of the barbarous obduracy of his countrymen, whose general reply to all his representations of the woes of prisoners, used to be, "They must have deserved it, since they are in prison." He found a very different spirit, among all classes of men, where the ancient faith prevailed.

The magistrates of Nola are said, by a writer in the sixteenth century, to discharge their office without remuneration; but he adds, also, that they accept and exercise it through charity, as if fathers correcting their children *.

When James the Great of Carrara was on his deathbed, having abdicated his power some time before, he ordered the doors of the house to be thrown open, and proclamation made, that if any man had been injured or defrauded by him, he should enter and state his grievance, that it might be repaired. Only one appeared at this summons, and he arrogantly demanded restoration of a fine which he had been condemned to pay; to whom James replied, "If justice had been done in your regard, you would not be here at present to make such a complaint; for you were guilty of a capital crime, and the penalty was commuted through compassion. Go thy ways, and amend. I am not conscious of having sinned, in respect to you, unless, perhaps, in having made your fine less than it ought to have been †."

In fact, the history of the middle ages will contain some inexplicable pages, if we do not bear in mind the fact presented even at the present day, that in Catholic countries a criminal, whatever may have been his guilt,

* Ambros. Leo de Nola, lib. iii. c. 7; in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Scard. de Antiq. Patav. lib. iii. 13.

is no sooner incarcerated than he becomes an object of general commiseration. As soon as the error is rendered harmless, men think only of the victim; and, ah! what reason do they not then discover for a tear of pity?—his youth, his abandoned state, the evil example which he saw around him, the neglect of those who ought to have instructed him; or, where no such palliative is found, the wiles of Satan, who ever goeth about seeking whom he may devour.

Acts corresponding to these views, which modern writers would assuredly deem extravagant, and even pernicious, are always commemorated, with peculiar fondness, by the ancient authors; of which an instance may be cited from Paradin's History of Lyons, which is thus quaintly related:—"A certain poor wretch escaping from the gibbet in the public square of Lyons, and the officers of justice calling upon the people to fly in pursuit, an Italian merchant, moved to compassion, scattered all the money in his purse among the people who pursued; and as he hastened for his life with still greater devotion than they ran for the prey, this merciful artifice was crowned with success. Not content with that, the Italian gave a crown to a lad to swim across the Rhone, in order to deceive the officers, who, on running to the other side, found only the poor pickpenny*."

Such commiseration every prisoner in Catholic countries can still hope to find in human breasts. When crime covers him with disgrace, and consigns him to the last punishment—when his heart sinks within him at the prospect of man's vengeance, and with a terror of future judgment, he has still a comforter and a friend in the priest, in the poor friar, or in the holy laic, who comes to him in obedience to the rule of his blessed order, or, moved by personal gratitude perhaps, and provided with mystic balms of consolation, like the hermit in the legend, who kissed the hands of a robber at his death, saying, "These are the hands which carry me to Paradise; for they often took my substance from me, and, when I was angry, struck me; and as patience was granted to me, I consider that they have conduced to my salvation†." The wretch is led within the prison, 'tis closed; he looks and sees the latticed bar, the bed of

* Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. c. 23.

† Guy de Roye, le Doctrinal de Sapience.

straw;—he dares not look again. The delusion of years vanishes in an instant: he turns, with sickening soul, within the cell, and sighs, "It is no dream—and I am desolate." But stay awhile:—the midnight passed, and to the massy door a light step comes; it pauses—it moves once more; slow turns the grating bolt and sullen keys. Who enters here?—it is the veiled penitent, who, through the love of Jesus, has come to give the prisoner alms and food—to bring him pictures of some saint or holy image; it is a hooded friar, to speak words of consolation to his soul—words of the Saviour, words of his blessed Mother, words of his apostles—replete with hopes of atonement and grace, of peace and mercy. Or mark the worst!—

> "'Tis morn—and o'er his altered features play
> The beams, without the hope of yesterday.
> What shall he be ere night?—perchance a thing
> O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing,
> By his clos'd eye unheeded and unfelt,
> While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
> Chill, wet, and misty, round each stiffen'd limb—
> Refreshing earth, reviving all but him."

The same friar, the same penitent, is at his side; and it is a mourning now full of rejoicing, for they have spoken to him of sin, and of its penalties—of the cross of Christ, and the way of the cross, which all that are Christ's must tread—the woe reserved for the hardened heart, and the subtle mystery of God in leading men by calamity and shame to peace. Human justice cannot complain, for the debt is paid, and society avenged; but heaven and heavenly spirits smile, for mercy in the soul and secret world reigns.

Connected with the administration and execution of justice, the spirit of Catholic countries, in regard to sympathy with the guilty, has, I am aware, been a source of offence to the modern philosophers; but it should be remembered, that however extreme may appear the development of mercy in this respect, it could hardly have exceeded, at least in its principle, what was not only recommended, but required by religion in ages of faith. The great guides of the middle ages are continually reminding men of the summary of our Lord's charge to his disciples—misericordiam volo, et non sacrificium—of those exhortations of Sacred Scripture, "Be merciful to

one another, humble * ; put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy"—of those solemn invitations from the Almighty, who desires above all titles that of the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolation—the merciful and compassionate Lord, of long-suffering, who, commanding his creatures to shew mercy, proposes himself for their example, saying, "Estote misericordes sicut et Pater vester misericors est †." Hence the Ambrosian sentence, which the Jesuit Drexelius presses on the especial attention of princes, that the whole sum of the Christian discipline consists in mercy and piety ‡. Cresolius, another member of the same company, remarks, that the word holy, with the Hebrews, signifies merciful § ; and he proceeds to point out how many times holiness is used for mercy with the royal prophet, as in the psalm where he saith, "Dominus mirificavit sanctum suum," which in the Hebrew is read, "misericordem suum."

"If we investigate the reason and cause of mercy," says St. Bernardine of Sienna, "we shall find that it includes in itself the perfection of all virtues; for he who is truly merciful feels and bears the miseries of all as if they affected himself, pardons all injuries, deplores all sins, wishes to all men plenitude of grace, injures no one, circumvents no one, is always poured out to all liberality, beholds all men as a father and mother behold their children ||." Not that the mercy here spoken of was thought to arise from the effect of the imagination, placing men in the same situation as that of the sufferer, who was its object. A great French physician, faithful to the doctrines of Christian times, has well shewn that even natural benevolence and pity have a higher source than the effect of a return on ourselves, as certain sophists have pretended, who explain every thing in the animal economy by the theory of personality. "Visit the hospitals," he says, disproving their assertion ; "the most dreadful maladies you will pity most, and yet they are those from which it is nearly certain that you will be

* Pet. i. 3.
† Vin. Bellov. Spec. Morale, lib. i. p. iv. dis. 21.
‡ Drexelius, Gazophylac. Christi, p. iii. c. 6.
§ Anth. Sac. 513.
|| S. Bernard. Senens. Serm. ix.

always preserved *." Nevertheless the grace of the blessed merciful was distinct even from the sublime faculty which consists in the innate want that we feel of sympathising with the misfortunes of our fellow-creatures; and this the Catholic moralists are careful to shew in their very definitions, which always include as an essential principle a motive divine, which has no influence in the virtue of nature or preceding grace.

Thus, in the moral Mirror ascribed to Vincent of Beauvais, the author, showing that no material sacrifice so much pleases God as mercy, adds this proviso—shewn on account of God †. This is that mercy which was known to confer beatitude, of which Pope Leo says, "The force is such, that without it, there can be no other virtue," the grounds of which are shown in those solemn paintings that may be so often remarked over the ancient tribunals; as where the blessed Virgin, with joined palms, and head inclined as if regarding the earth, is seen on one side, while the last judgment is represented on the other ‡. In short, a glance at the crucifix explains the whole difficulty; and it may be remarked, that the symbol which has superseded it in the modern civilization, representing a woman blindfolded and holding a balance, is never found on any monument of the middle ages. No foolish Pagan allegory was then used, to instil proud thoughts into human breasts. The balance was for the hand of the archangel;—the justice of man was mercy.

CHAPTER IV.

From prisons let us pass to other scenes of woe, that we may contemplate the charity of the blessed merciful in ages of faith. Nearest to where we stand at present are the slaves. Let us visit them, and mark how Catholicism alleviates their sorrows, and gradually accomplishes the glorious, godlike work of their moral and social enfranchisement.

* Alibert, Physiologie des Passions, tom. ii. 87.
† Spec. Morale, lib. i. p. iv. 10.
‡ In Thes. Antiq. Ital. v. Splend. Ven.

How wide a field was here opened for the exercise of mercy, may be inferred at once, if we only consider the fact that those nations of antiquity whose manners approached the nearest to the virtue of the Christian discipline—as the Dorians generally, and above all the Spartans—were nevertheless precisely those that were distinguished for the obstinacy with which they retained slavery. Humanity, indeed, was not one of the Dorian virtues; but no nation, no philosopher, no legislator, no founder of any religious system, seems to have conceived the idea that it would be either possible or well to abolish such a custom, so deeply and universally was it interwoven with the whole state and destiny of the human race.

To form a just estimate of the effects of Christian mercy in alleviating the misery of slaves, we should bear in mind what was the moral as well as social degradation of these wretched men in the ancient society. Plato puts the saying in the mouth of an Athenian, that there is nothing sound in the soul of a slave, and that no man of sense will ever put confidence in any one of that race *. As Moehler remarks, however, it is not strange that a legislator who would recommend a government to banish or put to death weak or sickly children, should regard slaves as being only half men †. Aristotle is most anxious to prove that slavery is, all throughout, conformable to nature. Hesiod says, that slaves are to the rich what oxen are to the poor. The master had full and uncontrolled power of life and death over the slave, and whatever the latter could acquire became his possession. Seneca describes their condition with the Romans in many families. "Unhappy slaves," says he, "are not allowed so much as to move their lips. The rod silences every murmur; and not even fortuitous sounds, such as a cough or a sneeze, are suffered to pass without stripes. All night long they must remain fasting and silent ‡."

Notwithstanding the great revolution which was inevitably to result from the propagation of the Church, it is evident, however, that the apostles and first teachers

* De Legibus, lib. vi.

† Geschichte der Aufhebung der Sklaverei durch dar Christenthum.

‡ Sen. Epist. lib. i. 47.

of Christianity contemplated no other means of deliverance, for this class of men, than what would naturally and gradually follow from the operation of divine faith. No word that could encourage rebellion or acts of violence ever escaped their lips; they left the divine seed to fructify in its due season; and so well justified was their confidence, that as soon as religion began to exercise its influence upon society, we find the spontaneous mercy of individuals dictating and carrying into effect the measures which those who took a comprehensive view of the whole scheme and spirit of divine faith must have seen was conformable to it from the very first.

The apology of Origen, in the third century, supplies evidence that the Christians had become very active and successful in the conversion of slaves. "We confess," he says, "that we wish to instruct all men; and though Celsus may not wish it, we wish to shew servants how, by acquiring a free mind, they may be ennobled by the Word*." In fact, as Moehler remarks, had not this interior emancipation preceded the reception of external liberty, the action of Christian mercy, in the deliverance of slaves, would have brought upon the world unparalleled calamities; and the effects would have been the same as if hell itself had sent out all its inhabitants at once, and had given them their freedom upon earth. The council of Gangra, in the third canon, declared, that if any one, under pretence of piety, should teach a slave to despise his master, and not to minister to him with benevolence and all honour as to his master, he should be anathema. But what a new era dawned upon the world when the voice of the Christian teachers preached faith and freedom to the servile race! "Some one may say," observes Lactantius, "'Are there not amongst you, also, poor and rich—slaves and masters? Is there not a difference, then, between each?' No! nor do we, on any other account, style one another brethren, excepting that we believe ourselves to be all equal; for as we measure all human things not by body, but by spirit, though there be a different condition of bodies, yet we have no slaves; since those whom we have we call brethren in spirit, and our fellow-servants. For God, who creates and inspires men, wished that all should be

* Adv. Cels. lib. i. 54.

just—that is, equal; that no one should be separated from his celestial benefits. With him, no one is a slave—no one a master; for since he is the same father to all, by equal justice we are all his children *."

Since the time of the apostle Paul, no one conferred a greater service upon slaves than St. Chrysostom, who, in his preaching, continually expatiates upon the change which Christianity had effected in regard to them, whose deliverance and enfranchisement he shows to be an irresistible consequence of faith. "I know," saith he, alluding to this, "that I am displeasing to those who hear me; but what can I do? To this I am bound, and I will not desist †." God made man free. Abel, Seth, and Noah, had no slaves. It is certain that originally all were free; but sin, beginning with Adam, prepared the way for servitude, and entailed it on the human race in the threefold form of subjection—that of the wife to her husband, of the servant to his master, and of all men to the rulers of the state; all which relations are divine, as being rendered necessary by the fall ‡. Yet the deliverance wrought by Christ includes exemption from what is evil in each of these. "In the Christian Church," says Chrysostom, "there is no slavery in the old sense of the word. There is only the name among the disciples of the Lord; the thing itself is abolished, in the same manner as death is now become only a name, having lost its terrors and its reality. No Christian is a slave; those that have been born again are all brothers. We attend not to the noble, but to the second birth. You say, 'My father is a consul—why does that affect me?' You have ancestors, no doubt, since you have come after them; but I may call a slave a nobleman, and a nobleman a slave, when I am informed as to their moral characters; for who is a slave, but he who commits sin? The other slavery is but an external and accidental affair §.' Slave and free are only names. What is slavery?—a name. How many lords lie drunken upon their couch, while slaves stand by, fasting? Which

* Lact. Div. Instit. lib. v.

† Hom. xl. in Ep. i. ad Cor.

‡ Hom. xxii. in Ep. ad Eph.; xxix. in Genes.; and Serm. iv. in Genes.

§ Or. in Lazar. Hom. xviii. in Ep. i. ad Tim.

shall I call the not free—the fasters or the drunkards? But Christianity makes no confusion—there are masters and servants still. The slave praises Christ as his master, and the freeman feels himself as the servant of Christ; so both are left free in subjection. Masters and slaves serve one another; and it is far better to be in this manner the slave, than under any other circumstances the master. Let us suppose that one man hath a hundred slaves, who serve him unwillingly, and that another has a hundred friends, who assist him with cheerful zeal: which would be happier? In the latter case, there is no anger, no chastisement, no threatening The one serves through necessity, the other through gratitude. So God wills it. He himself washes the feet of his disciples, and says, 'He that will be your master, let him be your servant.'"

St. Chrysostom concludes his admonitions with these words—most important, as Moehler remarks, in judicial history:—"Let there be a reciprocal, and in that manner, no service—*ἔστω δουλείας καὶ ὑποταγῆς ἀντίδοσις· οὕτω γὰρ οὐκ ἔσται δουλεία.* Let the master attend to the wants of the servant. Does the master renounce his obligatory service? Then in that case there is no law why the slave should be any longer slave."

But it was not deemed sufficient to lay down these principles. In one of his homilies he blames those who proceed with a train of slaves to the market-place, and make the brethren of Christ, the temples of the Holy Ghost, mere ministers to the vainest pride. He says that one or two slaves should be sufficient for the real wants of a rich master—nay, one slave can serve two or three masters. Whoever has more should cause them to be instructed in some handicraft, and give them their freedom;—nay, men should purchase slaves, and when they are well instructed in some trade by which they can gain a livelihood, set them free*.

The history of the middle ages supplies an interesting comment here; for Catholicism was not content with destroying slavery, but, as De Coux remarks, "it had secured by a thousand admirable modes of industry the lot of the newly enfranchised; and so long as society remained faithful to its voice, it knew how to preserve it

* Hom. xl. in Ep. ad Cor.

from those dissensions between the rich and poor which were the disgrace and the scourge of the most flourishing republics of antiquity."

But to resume the discourses of St. Chrysostom. "When the multitude of believers at Jerusalem had all things in common, there were certainly no members of that community who had slaves." He excuses Abraham, by saying, that though he had a number of slaves, he used them not as such. In short, this great father of the Eastern Church went as far, in this respect, as it was possible for a bishop.

Moehler, proceeding to trace the operation of the same principles in the West, produces several remarkable passages from the writings of St. Ambrose, who shows how they are to be reduced to practice in many of his works, as when he treats on Abraham, on Jacob, and the blessed life *, and on the patriarch Joseph †. "Slaves, therefore," he says, "have an origin whence they may glory. Joseph was a slave. They have whence they may be consoled; they have what they may imitate, that they may learn the possibility of a change of state without a change of manners, that there may be freedom and constancy in slavery. No condition causes an obstacle to the commendation of a man. Whether slave or free, we are all one in Christ; and there is no greater dignity than to serve him, for this is the servitude in which Paul found glory. Is it not the highest glory to be estimated so high that the blood of the Lord is the price of redemption ‡?"

After St. Ambrose, among the Latin fathers, we meet nowhere with a nobler development of this doctrine than in the works of St. Augustin, and in the works of St. Peter Chrysologus, bishop of Ravenna, who laboured to extirpate the remaining spirit of Pagan severity in respect to slaves. The first known instance, among the great, of a real enfranchisement of slaves, was that of Hermes in Rome, prefect of the state, who was converted to Christianity by Pope Alexander, in the reign of Trajan, while this emperor was absent on his expedition against the Persians. Hermes went over to Christianity with his wife, and sister, and sons, and 1250 slaves, with their

* De Jacob. et Vit. Beat. lib. i. c. 3. † Lib. i. c. 4.
‡ Exhort. Virginit. c. 1.

wives also and children; and on Easter-day, when they were baptized, he gave them all civil freedom; and as they had learned no trade, and beside had no capital, he enriched each of them with costly gifts. Another memorable example was given, in the time of Diocletian, by the prefect of Rome, Chromatius, who had been converted by the centurion St. Sebastian, and who was received into the Church along with all his family, composed of 1400 slaves of both sexes, whom he immediately set free, saying, that they who begin to have God for their father should cease to be the slaves of a man; and to these he gave all necessaries *.

But even had we not such express records, the evidence would have been satisfactory. What new ideas and acts of mercy must have been in operation, before such a picture could have been presented to the world as that which the Church proposes in the office on St. Charles's Day, when she tells of Vitalis, a slave, and Agricola, his master, both arrested at Bologna, in the persecution of Diocletian, for preaching together Jesus Christ—when, after the slave had suffered with constancy all kind of torments, to death, the master, the fellow-servant of his slave, is fixed upon the cross, and shares with him in the glory of his martyrdom!

From the writings of St. Jerome, also, we can infer what multitudes of slaves were then receiving their liberty from rich families. St. Melanæ the younger, with consent of her husband, Pinius, discharged 8000 slaves; and she presented to her brother-in-law, Severus, many others, who chose not to be free. She had also possessions in many parts of Italy, Sicily, Gaul, Spain, Britain, and Africa. The holy Sampson, a contemporary of the Emperor Justinian I., would not suffer, we are told, a troop of slaves to continue attending him, but deemed them all worthy of freedom, and gave them at once from his own property what was necessary for their future maintenance †. Justinian himself boasts that it had always been an object of his solicitude to raise from slavery to freedom as many as possible ‡. The mercy, however, of the Church and of the Christian society, was not content with delivering those who had been born

* Bolland, Mai, Januar.
† Acta SS. Boll. Jun. ‡ Novell. 89.

slaves, but it sought also to redeem those who were become such by capture and imprisonment; and one object on which the riches of both were expended, was the ransom of such persons.

The Popes exercised the right of enfranchisement, and recommended to all men the same practice. "Since our Redeemer," says Gregory the Great, in one diploma, "the founder of all nature, wished for this end to assume flesh, that he might restore us to pristine liberty, it will be well done if men, whom from the beginning nature made free, and the law of nature subjected to the yoke of slavery, should be enfranchised by the benefit of manumission; therefore, by the intuition of piety moved, we make free from this day, and Roman citizens, you Montana and Thomas, servants of the holy Roman Church *." Constantine extended the law farther, and declared that no Jew could possess a Christian slave. Later ordinances applied this prohibition to heathens and Samaritans.

The great philosophers and legislators of the middle age transmitted these traditions, and continued to perfect the harmony between the external order of society and the principles of faith. It would be curious to compare the language of popes and councils respecting slaves and savages with the solemn discourses of the philanthropical presidents of modern states, who avowedly consign whole nations to destruction in the name of humanity and universal benevolence. St. Thomas showed that Christianity should necessarily induce freedom. He maintained that if a Jew who was a slave should receive baptism, he would become free, without ransom, from that moment. And, in point of fact, we have seen that the laws of Constantine had restored liberty to those who were kept in slavery, and permitted their enfranchisement in the Churches on the simple testimony of a bishop. Nevertheless, till so late as the seventh century, slavery continued to exist in many parts of the old Roman world, for it was not possible that the Church could at once wholly extirpate it. Nay, it continued to be necessary, as in the time of the apostles, to make no other opposition to it than by preaching the Christian doctrine, and leaving men to draw from it the natural infe-

* Greg. M. Ep. lib. vi. 12.

rences, and to exercise of their own accord the mercy which it was designed to inspire. That such inferences continued to be drawn by private persons, is proved by abundant testimony. The influence of the Catholic spirit, in this respect, may be gathered from any one of the innumerable instances on record, such as the description which St. Theresa gives of her own father; for though this is evidence of a modern date, it represents most faithfully the agency which had all along been in operation. "My father," she says, "was a man of much charity towards poor people, and compassion towards the sick, and especially so much so towards his servants, that he could never resolve to keep any slaves, for the tenderness which he had towards them; and there being once a slave in his house who belonged to his brother, he caused her to be treated and fed as if she had been one of his own children, and said, that through compassion he could not well endure to see her unless she might be made free *."

The Church, however, in receiving land from the barbarian converts, was even obliged to accept with it the institution which had become an integral part of the whole social and political system of the nations in which she found herself. She respected the common law of those nations, and made less use of absolute decrees than of the slow but more certain power which was imparted to her by faith and her influence on the human heart. By degrees, and as soon as it could be done without causing greater misery, she procured the abolition of slavery, first, by setting an example in generously relinquishing the right which the state annexed to her possessions, afterwards, in moving the consciences of the people, inducing them to imitate her, and, finally, in prevailing on the state to legalize its suppression.

A recent historian remarks, to the honour of the Church in general, that during the middle ages, the condition of the serfs would have been intolerable, but for the ministers of religion. Though forming a part of the feudal system, prelates and abbots were uniformly the protectors of the villains; and as one third of the lands throughout Europe were under their immediate controul, we may conceive how greatly the worst evils of that

* Life of the Holy Mother, S. Theresa, 1.

system were mitigated *. "In all ages and countries," he remarks, "the Church has been an indulgent landlord; so that the condition of the serfs in one fourth of France would not be oppressed. When the Church had no temporal jurisdiction, she yet considered it incumbent on her to interfere in behalf of the poor, and the bondsmen: wherever there was a rural community, there would be a Church and a resident pastor, whose influence in these days of religious feeling, would not be inferior to that of the resident judge or noble."

The serf held an intermediate state between the ancient slavery and the modern service. This kind of servitude inspired less compassion, and that is one cause, no doubt, of its long duration. Bathilde, wife of Clovis II. and Regent, during the minority of her son, had declared, by an ordinance, that thenceforth slaves might possess property. Under the princes of the second race, personal servitude was either abolished, or greatly mitigated. A capitulary of Charles the Bald, in 864, gave permission to serfs to enfranchise themselves, and reminded those who might not conceive themselves bound to give their money to a free man, in time of famine, that our Lord has said, by the mouth of the apostle, "can he who, having the riches of this world, shall see his brother in need, will shut up the bowels of his compassion from him, believe that the charity of God abideth in him †?" Under the third race, the care of providing for the liberation of the serfs seems to have been regarded as a part of the inheritance attached to the crown. In 1135, Louis le Gros enfranchised the serfs in his domains. Louis VIII. signalised the beginning of his reign by a similar enfranchisement. Queen Blanche, during the minority of St. Louis, hearing that many serfs, men and women, had been thrown into prison by their patrons, on not being able to pay the tax, ordered the prisons to be thrown open, and delivered them. Finally, in 1315, the celebrated ordinance of Louis X. made the enfranchisement of the serfs an express object of legislation. "Servitude began to disappear," says Ducange, "insensibly; moved by pity and mercy, or receiving a pecuniary compensation, the seigneurs granted full and entire liberty to their serfs;

* Lardner's Cyclop. Europe in the Mid. Ages, vol. i. 286.
† V. tit. 36.—Edict. Pictens, cap. 34.

but it is remarkable, that on these occasions, the master used to present a request to the bishop, desiring that he would confer freedom on his slave, as if wishing to give the honour to religion, which had inspired them." A prince, at the end of the ninth century, expresses himself in these terms:—"In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, we Odo make known to all the faithful of the holy Church of God, present and future, that for the love of God, and in view of the eternal recompence, and by the suffrage of the bishop Rainon, we enfranchise the serf belonging to us, named Albert, and deliver him from all bondage." It was a pious custom of the great to accord enfranchisement, whenever they had received any great favour from God. A formula of Marculf recalls this usage,—"Divine Providence having procured us great joy by the birth of our son, in order to draw down the mercy of God, and that He may deign to preserve the life of this child, we ordain, that in each of our domains three serfs shall receive enfranchisement." It is delightful to find a full recognition, at all times, that it was to the influence of the Church this great work of mercy was to be attributed. The holy see, in fact, had always raised its voice against the crime of selling men for slaves, as even the French sophists of the last century acknowledged *. That odious traffic was denounced by the Church as antichristian. Among the ecclesiastical laws in England, of King Ine, in the year 643, we read, "If one buy a slave of his own nation, though a malefactor, and send him over sea, let him pay his weregeld, and make deep satisfaction to God."

It was through the representations of the archbishop Lanfranc, that William the Conqueror was induced to forego the traffic to Ireland in slaves. The redemption of foreign slaves was still left to the Church, and to the voluntary mercy of individuals. In England, a law of the Church prohibited the sale of ecclesiastical goods, unless the produce was to be applied to the ransom of serfs; truly a sublime exception, as the Count of Stolberg remarks. Of the episcopal zeal in this respect, we discover early traces. When the Saracens, having invaded the desert of Sinai, had carried off Theodulus, the eldest son of St. Nilus, who had withdrawn with him

* Bernardin de Saint Pierre, Etudes de la Nature, tom. i. 496.

from the world, the sorrowful Nilus set out in search of him, and at length found him at Eleusis, with the bishop of that city, who had ransomed him from the infidels. This was in the fourth century. St. Paulin, bishop of Nola, moved with the tears of a widow, whose son was a prisoner, rendered himself up in his stead. After some time, the chieftain, whom he had served as gardener in Africa, gave him not only his own liberty, but that of all his fellow-citizens who had been slaves there, with whom he returned in great triumph; and the anniversary of the day of their entry into Nola had always been celebrated in that city with divine ceremonies, and popular games, down to the sixteenth century, when Ambrose Leo wrote; as it is, probably, to the present day *. Fortunatus, describing Sidonius II., archbishop of Mayence, dwells at great length upon his mercy to captives.

> "Nudos veste tegis, captivis vincula solvens,
> Deposito reddens libera colla jugo.
> Exulibus domus es, et esurientibus esca,
> Felix cui Christus debitor inde manet †."

He renders a similar testimony to St. Nicetius, archbishop of Treves.—

> "Captivus quicunque redit sua limina cernens,
> Ille lares patrios, tu capis inde polos.
> Hic habet exul opem, jejunans invenit escas
> Qui venit esuriens, hinc satiatus abit."

The ardent zeal of St. Germain, bishop of Paris, at the close of the sixth century, for the redemption of slaves, is known to all students of history. "If the voices of all men were to be united in one," says the ancient writer of his life, "it would be impossible to say how prodigal he was of alms. Often contented with a tunic, he would cover some poor naked person with the rest of his clothes; so that while the indigent was warm, the benefactor was cold. No one can tell in how many places, or in what multitudes, he ransomed captives. The neighbouring nations, the Spaniards, Britons, Gascons, Saxons, and Burgundians, could attest how people ran to him from

* Ambros. Leo de Nola, lib. ii. c. 13. In Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Gallia Christiana, i. 347.

all parts, to be delivered from the yoke of bondage. When nothing remained to him, he would continue seated, sorrowful and disturbed, with a more sad countenance and severe conversation. If by chance any one then invited him to a repast, he excited the guests, or the very servants, to contrive means to deliver a captive; and then the soul of the bishop was delivered from its depression. If the Lord sent to his hands any sum, he used to say immediately, Let us return thanks to the divine clemency, for we have now wherewithal to redeem some men; and immediately the effect followed his words. Then the wrinkles passed from his forehead; his countenance became more serene; he walked with a lighter step, and his discourse was more abundant and joyous; so that in redeeming others, this man appeared to be delivering himself from the yoke of bondage *."

St. Exuperus, bishop of Toulouse, sold the sacred vessels of the Church, in order to redeem slaves from bondage; and his example was not rare. Bede relates, that whatever money St. Aidan received from rich men, used to be employed by him either in the relief of the poor, or in the redemption of captives. St. Otho, bishop of Bamberg, and apostle of Pomerania, is said to have softened even the most obstinate of the Pagans by his generosity in redeeming captives. When the coast of Kent was ravaged by the Danes, in the reign of Ethelred, St. Elphege, the archbishop of Canterbury, used frequently to repair to their camp with what money he could raise, in order to redeem his captive flock; but when he himself, with his monks, fell into their hands on the sack of the city, and was cast into a horrible dungeon, he refused to sign an order to the different churches of his diocese, that the treasures intended for the relief of the poor should be surrendered for his ransom. He would not, he said, purchase life on terms so disgraceful. From his childhood he had been the father of the needy: he would not, in his last days, deprive them of their resources. In similar circumstances, the blessed martyr, St. Lawrence, had hidden them: should he act so contrary to that example as to betray them?

Let us follow the history of the serfs. St. Wilfrid, the Northumbrian prelate, who had the happiness of

* Acta S. Ord. S. Benedict. tom. i. 244.

converting Sussex, which was the last Pagan kingdom that remained in England, was presented by the king Edilwalch, on receiving baptism, with the isle of Selsey, and two hundred and fifty slaves. These slaves he sedulously instructed in the doctrines and duties of Christianity; and on the day of their baptism, surprised both them and the whole nation by admitting them to civil freedom, declaring that they ought to be no longer bondsmen, who were coheirs with himself of the kingdom of heaven. All the circumstances connected with the emancipation of serfs throughout christendom, were minutely recorded in the ecclesiastical archives. Each parish could point out its deliverer. Thus we read, that Ranulphe de Homblonieres, bishop of Paris, enfranchised the serfs of Chantelou *; and that John, dean of St. Peter, at Troyes, with all the chapter, moved by piety, made a merciful decree, in 1194, giving entire freedom to all the serfs on the domains of their Church †. Manumission was frequent, even by the lay proprietors. Thus, in the time of king Edgar, a landholder directs, that thirteen out of his thirty slaves should be freed by lot; and that the emancipation was complete is certain, from the fact, that they were ordered to be placed in the highway, to go whithersoever they pleased. The charitable and pious often redeemed slaves from captivity. Thus, Edgyfu the Good redeemed Hig and Dunna, with their offspring, for thirteen mancusæ. Manumission generally took place in the churches, or by will, or by a written instrument. St. Bonitus, prefect of the province of Marseilles, in the time of king Sigebert, performed, we are told, the office rather of a priest than of a judge; for he never would order any one to be sold, as was the custom, or banished or detained captive; but, on the contrary, if he found any persons sold, he used to redeem them ‡. In the second book, we had occasion to witness the prodigious charity of St. Eloy, when but a laic and a silversmith, in purchasing whole companies of slaves, in order to set them free. But it was above all to the Benedictine monks, and, in later time, to the Mendicant friars, that Europe was indebted for the alleviation,

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xiii. 185.
† Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, p. 316.
‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 228.

diminution, and final abolition, of slavery in every form; and the records of their services, in this respect, though unknown to our modern statesmen and legislators, have extorted the admiration of learned historians in all ages and countries. Let us hear the words of the Rule, "non præponatur ingenuus ex servitio convertenti—quia sive servus, sive liber, omnes in Christo unum sumus: et sub uno Domino æqualem servitutis militiam bajulamus: quia non est personarum acceptio apud Deum *." Dom. Calmet, indeed, believes, that St. Benedict, in receiving slaves, required from them letters attesting the consent of their masters; as did St. Aurelian afterwards, not to give occasion to masters to complain, or to slaves to run away, under pretence of religion †. But from these few words of the rule, we can judge at once what a new æra had opened upon the world, and how little impediment any such formalities could offer to the tide which began to set in the direction of universal deliverance. St. Bavon, a hermit, and patron of the city of Ghent, died in the middle of the seventh century. He had at first led a worldly life; and a contemporary relates, that one day he happened to see a man whom he had formerly sold, while he lived in the world. At this sight, he was seized with terrible remorse for having committed such a crime, and turning to the man, he threw himself on his knees, saying, "I am the man who once sold you, bound with cords. Remember not, I pray you, the evil that I did to you, and grant me now a boon. Strike my body with rods; shave my head, as if I were a robber, and cast me into prison, bound hand and foot, as I deserve. Perhaps if you do this, the Divine clemency will grant me pardon." The man replied, that he did not dare do such a thing to his master; but the man of God, who spoke eloquently, obliged him to promise that he would do as he had requested. Constrained, then, and in spite of himself, he bound the hands of the man of God, shaved his head, and, with his feet tied to a stick, conducted him to the public prison; and the man of God remained there many days, deploring, day and night, these acts of a worldly life, which he had always before the eyes of his soul as a heavy burden ‡. "What a

* Cap. 11.

† Calmet, Comment. sur la Regle de S. Ben. i. 2.

‡ Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Bened. tom. ii. p. 400.

charm," exclaims a modern historian, "must this simple recital have had for men of the seventh century, who had servitude constantly before their eyes, and who beheld all the atrocities and sufferings which attended slavery!" Many of the ancient monasteries were monuments of the redemption of men from slavery. In the year 685, St. Berchaire abandoned the world, and came into the forest of Der, near Esparnay, where, meeting some soldiers, who led captive eight boys and eight girls, he ransomed them with the money which great lords had presented to him. The girls became nuns in an abbey, which the noble Lady Valtide enabled him to found for them at Pellemonstier; that is, Puellare monasterium, which was in a part of that forest which she gave him, and the niece of this illustrious woman was made the first abbess. Also with the eight boys, he founded the abbey of Monstier-en-Der, for which he obtained many privileges from King Childeric II., who even gave to him his royal hunting lodge of Puisié in that forest, on the site of which the saint built a Church, dedicated to God, under the title of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul *." St. Fale, of whose mercy we have already heard instances, was of a noble family of Auvergne; but while a child, he was taken prisoner by some soldiers of King Thierry, and reduced to bondage. At this time, he was a little shaven clerk, and it was his delight to serve the holy ministers of the Church, so that it cost him many tears and sighs when he was torn away into a strange land by barbarous soldiers. Being led to Troyes, he was sold there as a slave, at the time when the holy abbot Aventin was forming a congregation with his monks. This holy man one day, by celestial guidance, went out of his monastery, and seeing some people conducting a chain of young captives, he stopped and accosted the owners. "Now, Sir," said the men, "if you wish to buy this boy for your Church, we will let you have him cheap, to content you." The venerable abbot, moved with compassion, and admonished, as it is said, previously by a dream, pulled out twelve crowns of gold, and thus the miserable avarice of these robbers was satisfied, and the little captive was delivered up to him. The holy man received him as his spiritual son and a child of God, and

* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 191.

gave him the habit of religion instead of his chains, and his own paternal sweetness instead of the rigour of these cruel masters. The child grew up, and, by the grace of God, advanced in such piety and obedience, that in process of time, on the death of the venerable Aventin, he succeeded him in the office of abbot, which he discharged till his death with the utmost humility and holiness *. On one occasion, a servant, through accident, committed a fault against his master; and knowing him to be of a choleric disposition, fled in terror to the abbey, and entreated St. Fale, the abbot, to protect him. In this instance, the minister of heaven's mercy was outraged in consequence; but the prayers and intercession of the saint were said to have eventually delivered the sufferer †. St. Filibert, abbot of Jumièges, in the seventh century, not content with labouring for the salvation of the people of Neustria, used to send his monks beyond sea, provided with money, to ransom captives; many of whom became monks in that house. One of them, named Sydonius, who was ransomed in Ireland, distinguished himself at Jumièges, by his zeal and science. St. Ouen, who often visited this monastery, became acquainted with his merit, and established him abbot in a monastery of his diocese, which had been built by King Thierry III., where this monk died in odour of sanctity, and the place bears the name of Saens from him to this day ‡. St. Richarius, besides his monastery near Abbeville, had also a house on the sea shore, partly that he might be lodged there when about to cross over to preach to the Britons, and partly to enable him to redeem captives, of whom he used to deliver vast numbers, and some of them he placed in his monastery §.

By the very act of embracing the monastic state, men felt bound to enfranchise all who had been subject to them personally. When the duke St. William, in the time of Charlemagne, became a monk at Gellon, besides distributing abundant alms to the poor, he gave liberty to his former serfs; and it was not till after these acts, that he left his country, to follow the cross of Christ in

* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, p. 115. † Id.

‡ Deshayes, Hist. de l'Abbaye de Jumièges, 10.

§ Chronic. Centulensis sive S. Richarii apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

truth *. Calmet proves, however, that from the time of St. Benedict slaves used to be given to monasteries, to cultivate the lands at a distance, on which, consequently, the monks could not labour. These slaves formed part of the property given to religious houses, and could not be separated from it †. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, remarks, that the Greek monks have no slaves, but that the Latins have. The councils of Agde, and of Epaone, prohibit abbots from enfranchising such slaves, on the ground that it would not be just if they should stand idle while the monks worked every day in the fields. Ecbert, archbishop of York, and St. Isidore, of Seville, regarded it as injustice in abbots, who have no personal property, and who conferred nothing on their monasteries, to diminish their possessions by enfranchising the slaves, who belonged not to them individually: but, notwithstanding these prohibitions, as Calmet observes, most monasteries gradually enfranchised their slaves; and the rule of St. Ferreole, in forbidding abbots to enfranchise a slave of their monasteries, adds a proviso, which explains how they did so; for he says, that it must not be done without the consent of the monks, or unless the abbot procures a substitute de propria facultate ‡. This latitude was sufficient; and, accordingly, the work of emancipation proceeded rapidly. When large estates were given to the new monastery founded by St. Benedict, of Aniana, about four leagues west of Montpellier, he immediately enfranchised the serfs attached to them. In much later ages, we find the zeal of the monastic houses still employed in emancipating the serfs whom they found on the lands, which, from time to time, were bestowed upon them. In the reign of Philippe-le-Hardi, we find the abbey of St. Maur, and the chapter of Paris, granting letters of manumission to their serfs at Creteil; and in the year 1282, the same abbey enfranchising its serfs at Valenton §. In 1244, Thomas de Mauleon, abbot of St. Germain, had enfranchised all the vassals of the parishes of St. Antony and of Verrieres ||. In 1248, the inhabitants of Courbevoye were delivered

* Mabill. Act. S. Ord. S. Bened. Sæcul. iv. pars I.
† Comment. sur la Regle de St. Ben. i. 11.
‡ Reg. S. Ferreol. c. 36.
§ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom xii. p. 45.
|| Id. tom. ix. 355.

from servitude by the abbot of St. Denis *; and in 1247, the inhabitants of Nanterre were enfranchised by Thibaud, abbot of St. Geneviève, on condition, that when required, they would come to the defence of the abbey †. In 1248, William, abbot of St. Denis, gave letters of manumission to all the serfs of Villeneuve-St. Denis ‡. Similar details are found in the local records of all other countries, where each monastery was a centre, not only of light and piety, and spiritual emancipation, but also of temporal deliverance from the state of bondage. Notwithstanding, however, the zeal and efficacy of the monastic institute in general, it was found expedient, in subsequent times, to found new orders, for the express purpose of delivering captives from the hands of the Sarassins; for, as the Danes and Normans, in the earlier ages, used to carry off from the coasts of England and France, and enslave, whole hosts of inhabitants, so, in later times, these new enemies of the Christian name used to descend upon the shores of the Mediterranean, for the purpose of procuring slaves; and scarcely, at present, can any one form an adequate estimate of the horrors and desolation which they produced in Sicily, in Campania, and Calabria, and generally along the coasts of Italy and Spain §. It was while saying his first mass, that St. John of Matha was inspired with the design which he afterwards effected, according to the advice of a holy hermit, named Felix de Valois, of redeeming the Christians who had fallen into the hands of the Mahometans; and with this view, he founded the order of the Trinitarians, and passed twice to Tunis. This was so early as in the twelfth century. It has been calculated, that in the interval of 437 years, this order of the Trinitarians ransomed from the Sarassins 30,720 slaves.

The bare estimate of itself must excite our admiration; but what would be our feelings, if we could behold the instruments in actual operation here?—I mean, if we were eye-witnesses of the acts of sacrifice, and heroic charity, by which this great work was effected!

* Id. tom. vii. p. 109.

† Id. vii. 122. ‡ Id. tom xv. 3.

§ Gabriel. Barrii de antiq. et situ Calabriæ, lib. i. in Thes. Antiq. Italiæ, ix. Placidi Regna, Notitia Hist. Messanæ in Id. tom. x. Leandri Alberti Descript. Italiæ, pp. 21. 208. 356.

"I once knew, and you, my sisters, have seen," says St. Theresa, "a certain monk, of the order of the blessed Father Peter of Alcantara, who came to see me one day, bathed in tears through the violent desire which he entertained of delivering a captive by taking his place. We conferred about it together, and at last his general granted permission on his urgent prayers. But when he was about four leagues from Algiers, God took him to himself; and who can doubt of the recompence which he received * ?" In fact, this action was but strictly according to the vow of the fathers of mercy. This latter order was instituted by St. Raymond of Pegnafort, St. Peter Nolasco, and King James I. of Arragon. It was first announced by St. Raymond, in the cathedral of Barcelona, on the feast of St. Laurence; and the multitude received the intimation with enthusiastic acclamations †. The king, at Barcelona and other places, built convents, and richly endowed them, for the brethren of this order. A certain number was to be chosen every year, who should go to the Sarassins to redeem the poorest; and each took a vow, in addition to the three of continence, poverty, and obedience, that if in the redemption of captives money should fail, when despair might induce any one to deny the faith, the brother was to redeem that captive first, and remain in his place till money could be transmitted to ransom him also. This good king James had himself experienced imprisonment for more than forty months, while in the age of tender youth, from Simon Montfort, at great peril of his life, at Carcasson, and also from the master of the Templars, in the citadel of Montion, that he might escape the snares of Sanctius and others; and during his captivity he had vowed to God, commending himself to the blessed Virgin, that he would found this brotherhood on his deliverance ‡.

When St. Dominick was a youth, studying at Palentia, his charity being such that he sold all the books in his study to relieve the necessities of the poor during a great dearth, that he might see himself poor with the poor, there came a woman to him weeping bitterly, and be-

* St. Theresa's Thoughts on the Love of God, chap. iii.
† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.
‡ Bernardini Gomesii de Vita Jacobi I. Arragon. lib. ii.

seeching his assistance for the redemption of her brother, then captive by the Moors; and the charity of this holy young man was so great, that he earnestly besought the afflicted woman to sell him for a slave, and to exchange him for her brother: such was the force of charity in that pure and holy soul!

The blessed Matthew Carrieri, a friar of his order, after preaching with wondrous fruit in the states of Milan, Venice, and Tuscany, was entreated by the Genoese to visit their city for the same purpose: in compliance with which petition, he embarked from the Tuscan coast, with the intention of landing at Savona; but God permitted that the ship which was conveying him thither should fall in with a corsair's roving crew, which pursued and attacked her. What first follows, need not be described — the shriek of terror, and the mingling yell;—

> "For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell—
> Flung o'er that spot of sea the air of hell!"

In brief, the spoil is won;—Carrieri and his two companions, and all the passengers, are thus apparently doomed to perpetual slavery; but the holy friar—

> "Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd"—

speaks before the chief with so much grace and dignity, that without asking for his liberty, it is granted to him, as also to the two friars who are with him. These three are on the point of retiring, after having in vain solicited the deliverance of the other passengers, when lo! a woman's gentler anxious tone is heard,—"O friend of God, for blessed charity save my mother!" "Nay, but my daughter!" cries another voice—and, at the same moment, a lady and a most beautiful maiden threw themselves at his feet, and conjured him to have pity on them. The monk is never insensible. At the risk of irritating, by his importunity, the barbarian, who might easily be excited to retain himself, the friar returns to him, calmly meets the curious eyes that question of his coming seek, and repeats his entreaty, begging him to release at least two persons; but his prayer producing no effect on the corsair, the man of God offers himself instead of these two captives, and

entreats permission to remain in their place. To feel the force of such an act, we should observe that the poet who describes of late the Corsair has rather diminished than exaggerated the fearful character of the man; for he omits all mention of his avarice, which is the most appalling trait of all. Yet saith he,—

> "There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
> The full encounter of his searching eye;
> There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
> That rais'd emotions both of rage and fear;
> And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
> Hope withering fled, and mercy sigh'd farewell!"

Nevertheless, that pirate chief—man of loneliness and mystery—scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh—the slave of gold, the slave of lust—whose name appals the fiercest of his followers, and tints with sallower hue each swarthy cheek—beholds, with looks none ever marked in him before, that friar, whose countenance is pale with penance, not from fear, whose noble form is not wholly concealed by the coarse dark habit that wraps a breast bestowed on heaven alone. The heart of this terrible chief is softened, avarice yields to generosity, and he consents to set free, not alone the women, but all the prisoners, without exception;—

> "What was the spell that thus his soul could bind?—
> The power of thought, the magic of the mind."

The history goes on to relate how the friars proceed by land to Genoa, where the fame of this action had already spread; and how the first sermon of the preacher recalls innumerable souls to the cross of Jesus, to the ways of charity and faith *.

Don Faustus de Pagola, on his voyage to the Canary Islands, was taken by corsairs, and conducted in slavery to Algiers. His wife's brother, Thomas Carbonel, was a holy friar, who, on the first intelligence of the event, was going to imitate the founder of his order, and offer himself instead of the captive; but his advanced age was an insuperable obstacle. The barbarians demanded 8000

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 22.

crowns for his ransom, and the family could not furnish such a sum. The exertions of the friar, however, succeeded in obtaining it from many bishops and grandees of Spain; and the gentleman, after five months, was enabled to return to his family *.

Sometimes, however, the good offices and devotion of the merciful only turned to the profit of the infidels. Of this we have an instance in early times. Rodland, archbishop of Arles, taken prisoner by the Sarassins in 869, was kept in chains on board their ship, the infidels requiring for his ransom 150 pounds of silver, 150 cloaks, 150 swords, and 150 serfs. After some time, he died in their hands; but the Sarassins concealed his death, and only threatened to pursue their voyage immediately, unless the ransom were paid. Having at length received it, they sent the bishop to shore, sitting on his chair, and clothed in the sacerdotal vestments in which he was taken. Those who had sent the ransom hastened to congratulate him, but found only the dead body, which they then buried, with great lamentations, in the sepulchre which he had prepared for himself †.

Angelo Calessius, bishop of Santerini, in the Archipelago, was a Dominican friar, inhabiting his native city of Nicosia, the capital of the Isle of Cyprus, when, in 1570, it was besieged and taken by the Turks. After beholding his dear mother, Lucretia Calessia, and all his relations massacred, while he offered himself to the swords of the infidels, he was seized, stripped, loaded with chains, and placed among the other captives. He passed, at first, through many hands; but in fine, Osma, captain of a Turkish galley, purchased him, and led him as his slave to Constantinople. In a short time he proved so agreeable, that his master began to treat him no longer as his slave; he made him even sit at table with him, and allowed him to go out as often as he wished; but Angelo, full of faith and charity, only availed himself of this permission to visit every day the other captives, consoling them to the utmost of his power, and teaching them to render their sufferings meritorious by patience and submission to the order of Providence. Nevertheless, the general of the Dominicans, Seraphin Cavalli, and Pope Pius V., had not forgotten the holy

* Id. tom. v. liv. xxxix. † Gallia Christiana, Id. i. 44.

friar, whose name had been long known in Rome. They sent four hundred gold crowns for his ransom, and on the 8th of January, 1571, Osma set him free. Calessius might then have either returned to Cyprus, or enjoyed a better lot in some city of Italy; but the charity of Jesus Christ made him resolve on adopting a different course. He feared that the sufferings of the captives, consigned to fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom, might induce some of the weak to deny the faith; and he determined to remain at Constantinople, and expose his repose, his liberty, and his life, for the salvation of his brethren. During an entire year he remained there, always occupied in works of mercy, soliciting the charity of embassadors and rich merchants, and then carrying their alms down to the deep dungeons of the poor captives, some of whom he restored to liberty; and many young men who had become apostate he recalled to faith. After the battle of Lepanto, the Turks, however, became more rigorous and suspicious; they forbade him thenceforth to visit any of their slaves; and at length they accused him formally of being an enemy of the Prophet, and a papal spy. Either charge was sufficient to cost him his life; so, on the 3d of February, 1572, he was again loaded with chains, and thrown into an obscure dungeon. However, he had many friends; and as soon as his detention was known, they spared no effort to save him. Some noble citizens of Ragusa, who were then at Constantinople, gave a great sum for his ransom; and Abamachi, now king of the Algerians, joined his credit to the solicitations of the French ambassador; and the judge consented, at last, to deliver the prisoner, but on condition that he was instantly to quit the Turkish dominions. Unable, therefore, any longer to visit the captives in prison, he adhered to his resolution of serving them still; and for this purpose went to Italy, where he first repaired to Pius V., and then visited Naples, Bologna, Florence, Milan, and Venice, in order to inform the rich citizens of Cyprus, who were then living in those cities, of the situation of the captives; and his efforts were crowned with such success, that every one gave in just proportion to his means; so that he was able to send over great sums to ransom them. Stephen de Lusignan, whom he met in Italy, co-operated with him in this work of mercy. This was a holy and learned

Dominican, of the royal house of Lusignan, whose ancestors had reigned in Cyprus. Born in Nicosia, where he had been received at an early age into the order, he had followed his ancient master, the Bishop of Megara, into Italy, before the capture of the island. Two of his brothers, Hercules and John Philip, were slain fighting in its defence; and many of his nephews had been carried off slaves to Constantinople. These two friars exerted themselves during many years, and from time to time had the gratification of receiving many whose chains they had loosed at Constantinople. In order to obtain relief from Christian princes, they also employed their pens; and Calessius wrote two narratives, in Greek, at the end of the Universal History, published by Stephen de Lusignan; containing an affecting picture of the storming of Nicosia and Famagouste, to the former of which the author was an eye-witness. These narratives Stephen de Lusignan translated into Italian and French, and they brought to the friar abundant alms, which were employed in delivering or consoling the slaves, many of whom, forming whole families, were enabled in consequence to return to their country *.

These are delightful histories, and we might multiply them without end from the annals of any one religious order. Peter Pascal, the holy bishop of Jaen, having dispensed all his revenue in charity, and wishing still to be useful to his brethren, repaired to the Turks. He is loaded with chains; but the clergy and people of his Church send a sum of money for his ransom. "The saint," says Heliot, "received it with gratitude; but instead of employing it to procure his own liberty, he redeemed with it a number of women and children; fearing lest, through weakness, they might abandon the Christian belief; while he remained in chains till the barbarians gave him the martyr's crown."

In fact, as the religious principle was the actuating power, so the eternal salvation of human souls was the object, of these men of mercy. This order of the brethren of our Lady of Mercy, instituted by King James the First of Arragon, to redeem Christian captives from the Moorish pirates, or from the Sarassins of Valencia,

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. xxxii.

who made frequent descents upon Catalonia and Arragon, had for its chief motive, "ne tormentis seu diuturna servitute oppressi, Christianam religionem et fidem abnegarent*." Frequently, too, the charity of private individuals unconnected with any religious fraternity, took this direction in consequence of some domestic deliverance. Gilbert des Essarts, a noble knight of the diocese of Evreux, was taken prisoner by the Turks, in the first voyage of St. Louis to the Holy Land, and, after a long captivity, was miraculously brought back to his estate of Pontiere, on the evening of the day on which his wife had contracted a second marriage. He presented himself before her, weakened and reduced, with a sunk visage, and having a long beard, leaning on a pilgrim's staff six feet high, and loaded with chains on his hands and feet. That noble dame could not have recognized him, if it had not been for his presenting her with the half of a gold ring, of which he had left the other in her hands on setting out on his voyage, and which she had carefully preserved. Through gratitude for this happy reunion, they founded on their estate a house and chapel for the redemption of captives, which existed till the Revolution †.

The holy see, from time to time, reminded kings and people of their duties in respect to captives. Pope Innocent III. writes in these terms to the patriarch of Jerusalem, who had besought his aid in behalf of the Christian captives:—"Whosoever delivers any of the faithful from prison, will be delivered by Christ from hell. Since, therefore, this consolation of humanity is due to captives from the office of charity, and from the Lord's precept, those seem transgressors who are unwilling, when they have the power, to redeem captives; for which, according to the canonical constitutions, ecclesiastical goods ought to be resigned, which in other cases cannot lawfully be alienated. For there would be reason to fear that they were not subject to divine justice, if in any way they should pass a judgment contrary to this, making void the law of God on account of traditions of men, wishing to consult for things rather than for persons, and loving riches more than souls, as would appear

* Bernardini Gomesii de Vita Jacobi I. Arragon. lib. ii.

† Hist. d'Evreux, 209.

evident to demonstration if they should be unwilling to deliver, for the sake of redeeming their brethren, what they resign willingly for the sake of acquiring money." Therefore, desiring to provide for the salvation of both the captives and the free, he charges him to admonish and exhort kings and princes, and all the Christian people, in the name of the Lord to take such measures as are necessary for the deliverance of the captives, and to come forward generously to their assistance *.

As if to complete this picture, we find instances of the most exalted mercy exercised by the heroic princes of Europe towards the very men who were capturing Christians in order to enslave them. Of this a memorable example was furnished by Andrew Doria, when Draguthes the corsair fell into his hands. "Knowing," says Sigonius, "his ferocious manners and innate barbarity, he feared to let him loose at once, lest he should return to his piracy; and on the other hand, he could not think of putting him to death, or of keeping him in prison for ever. From the former plan his clemency revolted, for if he adopted that, he thought he should be as cruel as Draguthes himself; and from the latter he was dissuaded by the idea that Hariadenus and all other pirates would then boast that they only followed the example of the Christians in keeping prisoners chained in their dungeons. Moreover, he hoped that it might be possible to change the nature of Draguthes. So he ordered that he should be brought before him, and then, with a most gentle and benign voice, he calmly remonstrated with him on the cruelty of his former ways; telling him that nature had made all men free, and that, therefore, it was an iniquitous custom to reduce any man to slavery, and to extort money for ransoms. He implored him to renounce such measures in future, and to remember that he and other men were created equal by God; so that, though they might have hired servants for their just wants, they could have no slaves consistent with any justice. Draguthes replied that he would follow his counsels, and would be ready to endure all torments if ever again taken by him, after having violated his promise. So he set him free." In the mercy of Andrew Doria, whatever may have been his faults in

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xiv. 147.

other respects, it is easy to recognize the man who daily assisted at mass, recited the seven penitential psalms, and the solemn hymns to the blessed Virgin *.

But amidst these affecting examples, we must not forget to mention the religious orders of knighthood, which were similarly employed throughout the north of Europe, not only redeeming captives, but abolishing servitude. Charges having been made before the Pope against the Teutonic order in Prussia, the reply of the knights was in these terms:—"As to what is said that the brethren oppress their neophites under the yoke of slavery, we reject it as wholly incredible; since the liberty with which Christ has delivered us we grant to them, even unwilling to receive it, and ready to resist if they had occasion, and since we provide for them mercifully and paternally in all spiritual and temporal things †."

We come, at length, to consider the action of the civil power, which alone could complete the work of the blessed merciful in regard to slavery. One result from that influence of the clergy in the state, which we remarked in the last book, was the adoption by rulers of a resolution to perfect and extend the measures of emancipation which had emanated from the Church; and we must never forget that, in every instance, the motive assigned for such acts of spontaneous liberality was religion, and drawn from those principles of faith which the clergy had been occupied in instilling. Witness the decree of Philippe Augustus, published at Paris in the year 1180:—"For the good of the soul of our father, King Louis, and of our own soul, and of the souls of all our predecessors, we for ever absolve from all yoke of servitude all the serfs of Orleans, and of the villages near it. We wish them to be as free as if they had never been our serfs; and we pledge ourselves never to commit any violence upon the inhabitants of Orleans ‡."

In like manner, all the early acts of enfranchisement of slaves, as well as those of donations to Churches and to the poor, began with the words, "Pro remedio animæ nostræ: pro remissione peccatorum meorum." In fact, the adversaries of the Catholic Church in modern times

* Sigonii, de Reb. Gest. And. Doriæ, lib. ii.
† Voigt, Geschichte Preussens, iii. 146.
‡ Collect. du Louvre, tom. xi. 226.

have been forced to admit that it was by means of the very rites and discipline which they had renounced, that men were prevailed upon to abolish slavery. Sir Thomas Smith, secretary to Edward VI., says, that "the holy fathers, monks, and friars, had in their confessions, and especially in their extreme and deadly sickness, convinced the laity how dangerous a practice it was for one Christian man to hold another in bondage; so that temporal men, by little and little, by reason of that terror in their consciences, were glad to manumit all their villeins." Will it be believed, that after this admission he could add, "But the said holy fathers, with the abbots and priors, did not in like sort by theirs; for they also had a scruple in conscience to impoverish and despoil the Church, so much as to manumit such as were bound to their Churches and to the manors which the Church had gotten, and so kept their villeins still *." Melancholy but important testimony! for it proves to what an extravagance the blind aversion of these supporters of the new system proceeded, and with what assurance they were accustomed to reckon upon the ignorance or the prejudice of their contemporaries.

The movement of these blessed wheels, which wrought deliverance to captives during the period to which we look back has now been in some measure seen; but, reader, wouldst thou remain looking at them longer still, in order to observe how the Catholic religion continued to operate in this respect towards the conclusion of these grand ages? Open, then, the history of America, which shows the discovery of a new world. Christianity arrives there at the same time with Cortez and Pizarro; and while the ferocious conquerors charge the timid Indians with irons, religion, by the bulls of its sovereign pontiffs, by the voice of Las Casas, and of the holy friars of the two orders, accuses the conquerors and defends the victims.

Francis de Victoria, a learned Dominican and most celebrated professor in the university of Salamancha, whose brother Diego, of the same order, was preacher to the emperor Charles V., did but repeat the doctrine of the middle ages in his fifth lecture on theology, when he showed at great length that difference of religion is no

* Commonwealth, book iii. c. 10.

just cause for war, which can only be legitimate, he says, when some very great injury is inflicted on the state, or on its allies; and he concludes by saying, that when conqueror the king must act the part of a just arbiter between himself and the vanquished, and bear carefully in mind that generally all the fault is on the side of the prince, and that the poor people suffer from his ambition. In his fourth lecture he had treated on the right which the kings of Spain could have over the persons and property of the Indians; and though a Spaniard, he proves that neither barbarism nor infidelity, nor any other error of these nations, nor their refusing to receive the gospel, can give any right whatever to the Catholic kings to make war upon them, or to seize their lands *.

The Dominicans, in particular, who were deputed to evangelize the Indians, protested against the maxims of their greedy and barbarous countrymen. Braving all personal considerations, they proceed so far as to refuse absolution to those Spaniards who would hold the Indians in slavery; while King Ferdinand and his council, yielding to the views of a political interest, declare that they will take on their own conscience the risk of what might be unlawful in this slavery, and that, consequently, the Dominicans and the monks of the other orders ought to abstain, in future, from the invectives which "a charitable but little enlightened zeal had induced them to pour forth against this custom."

The allotted time would fail me, reader, if we should wait to see pass before us the train of these men of mercy. One glance at the chiefs of this procession would discover such men as Julien Garces, the Dominican, first bishop of Tsascala, in New Spain, who carried his complaints of the cruelty of his countrymen before the royal council of the Indies, and then before Pope Paul III., to whom he addressed his work in favour of the oppressed Americans; or Vincent Valverda, of the same order, first bishop of Cusco in Peru, who endeavoured to save the unhappy savages from Pizarro; and when his efforts were unavailing, returned to Spain to solicit the King of Castile to interfere in their favour; and who, after being obliged to wait four years for his answer, at length, on

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xxv.

succeeding, and being declared by a royal rescript protector of the Indians, hastened back to alleviate their sorrows; when, after devoting himself for some time to these works of mercy, he was martyred in the Isle of Puna, and devoured by cannibals, and so passed to the God whom he had served by mercy. Would that I could set before you, if not the heroic labours of the first bishop of Chiassa, Bartholomew de Las Casas, which would require our fixed attention many days, at least the magnanimous deeds and immortal discourses of the friars and prelates who co-operated with him; such as Peter of Cordova, Garsias de Loaysa, confessor of Charles V., and the archbishop of Seville, Don Diego Deza, and the friar Antonio de Montesino, who, in his second sermon before the admiral royal treasurer, and all the Spanish authorities, boldly challenged them to say by what right men who came from Spain, because they had no bread there, proceeded to fatten themselves on the substance of a people born as free as themselves. It is true, in general, the kings of Spain and the Spaniards who formed the majority, cannot be convicted of the guilt of having countenanced these horrors. Certainly not a little striking is the fact, that when a Spaniard and a canon of Salamanca was found capable of composing a book to maintain the justice of the war against the Indians, the government did not permit him to print it. At that time Las Casas, discouraged and overwhelmed with grief, had withdrawn from the spectacle of cruelties which he could not prevent, and was residing in his convent of Valladolid; but no sooner did he hear of this intended publication, than he came forward to oppose it, and in that resistance he was nobly seconded by the archbishop of Seville. On their remonstrance, the royal council referred the question to the universities of Alcala and Salamanca; and these two faculties, after examining the book, decided that its doctrine was pernicious. Sepulveda, for that was the author's name, made repeated efforts to obtain permission from Charles V.; but, when all were unavailing, he sent his manuscript to a friend in Rome, where it was secretly printed; but all copies were ordered to be suppressed, as soon as the fact was known. Some, however, were introduced into Spain, and then Las Casas took up his pen. Sepulvedo, however, still defending his doctrine, the two parties were permitted to

dispute before the emperor, when all the eloquence of Sepulvedo, who was called the Spanish Cicero, could not prevent the council from deciding against him, and thus confirming, by their sentence, the decision which had been long before given by the great light of Salamanca, Francis de Victoria *. But our limits can only admit of this passing allusion to names for ever associated with the benediction of the merciful. It is a subject which might occupy volumes, and from which, at the end of all, one could not turn without regret.

It is not, however, alone in regard to prisoners and slaves, that the action of the blessed merciful is presented to the notice of an historian, as affecting the public conduct of rulers, and men in power, during the middle ages. The great work of protecting all the weak and poor from oppression, for which God sent the first of his angels that was seen on earth †, still remained; and frequently, it must be acknowledged, the labours of the clergy, in this respect, were admirably seconded by those later angels who appeared, from time to time, crowned for an instant with a mortal crown, to show to the world how man could be transfigured by faith and love. One of the first acts of the Emperor Lewis the Pious, was the sending officers to all parts of the empire, to make restitution to all who had been oppressed by corrupt agents during the last years of his father's reign ‡; and Saint Louis, before embarking for the crusade, sent mendicant friars throughout his whole kingdom, to make inquiry of the poor, whether any of them had suffered injury in the king's name, and if so, at his expense to repair it. Some poor peasants came once, all in tears, to complain to Hedwige, the young queen of Poland, that the king's servants had seized their cattle. She ran to her husband, and obtained their immediate restitution. "Then," she said, "the cattle are restored to them, but who will give them back their tears?" You perceive how immense was the pity of these hearts, inflamed with divine love. On a former occasion, when considering the prerogatives of nobility in feudal times, we observed, that it did not exclusively enjoy such benefits from the state; and, in fact, the poor, and all persons comprised in the category of

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv.
† Gen. xvi. ‡ Thegani de Gestis Ludovic. 3.

the miserable, formed then a privileged class. By the common, imperial, and municipal laws, the protection of the weak was declared the duty of all princes*; and so many privileges were granted by the ancient Catholic legislations, in favour of persons who were objects of compassion, that their enumeration occupies a large volume, which was published by John Novaris, under the title of Treatise de Privilegiis Miserabilium Personarum, "by whom were understood," he says, "widows and orphans, sick persons and infirm, such as had suffered any reverse of fortune, the poor generally, captives, prisoners, foreigners, exposed children, penitents, old men and maidens, peasants, and that, too, although they had become miserable through their own fault." All persons included in this category were entitled to have their causes first brought on: a conclusion of the parliament or council of the university was null, if it turned to their prejudice: a general or special retraction could not include legacies made to them: in their favour, men could be obliged to sell their property: an extrajudicial confession was received in evidence for them: in the course of judicial proceedings, they enjoyed a great number of special privileges: an intention, orally expressed, was proof in their favour: they were exempted from penalty in the event of alleging false witnesses: from a sentence in their favour, there was no appeal: a cession made to them was not to be presumed pretended: a legacy to them, though uncertain, was to be sustained: it was to be presumed as made with a view to their misery: it was to be widely interpreted: any one could stipulate in their favour in their absence: doubtful donations were to be understood in their favour: doubtful points of law were to be determined in their favour: a woman could be their advocate in court: they could not be expelled from a hired house, if, at the expiration of the term, they chose to pay as much as others offered. Regularly, a lord, for his own use, in case of necessity, might eject a tenant; but if the house were rented by one included in the category of the miserable, he had not the power to drive him out; for the poor, in that respect, had the privilege of scholars, who could not be ejected by the proprietors of their lodg-

* Ex cap. ab Imperat. 23 Quæst. 3. cap. Regum, 23. q. 5. Carleval. in Tract. de Judiciis vii. 528.

ings, the law being pleased to consider them as among the miserable. The Falcidia were not to be charged on legacies made to any of these persons: the fabric of St. Peter waved its right when the testament was in their favour: a bishop in their cause could appear before his vicar, and seek justice: their causes could be heard, notwithstanding festivals: where sentences were equally divided, that which was in their favour was preferred: the onus of proof was on those against them; so that when prosecutors, though they should fail in evidence, it remained for the opposite party to prove their innocence: their houses were not to be demolished, although coining had been practised in them: a judge could proceed, ex officio, in their favour: they could appeal at once to superiors, without mediators: they had the benefit of whole restitution: things inalienable, could be alienated in their favour: their administrators could be compelled to give account during their power: legacies in their favour, though cancelled in the will, took effect, unless the real intention of the testator could be proved: commutations could be made in their favour: they were entitled to support during a process: equity, in their favour, was to be preferred to the rigour of written law: in their causes, if laws differed from the canons, the latter were to prevail: bishops, at their own cost, were to protect them, and clerks were bound to undertake their defence: bishops and clerks could be their guardians, and could negotiate for them: monks could be compelled to plead their cause: they could claim their prerogatives after renouncing them: their causes could be heard in the ecclesiastical courts: they could not be ejected from their houses, though it might be necessary for the landlord to take possession of them: a mandate in their favour did not expire at the death of those who made it: magistrates were to have regard to what was usefnl to them: on the loss of an instrument, witnesses were not to be required respecting its tenor in their favour: the right of sepulture of an extinct family could revert to them: there could be no rejection of witnesses in their favour: a judge could interrogate in their interests after the cause was concluded: they were not subject to fine for contumacy: they could be heard alleging suspicions against public officers, without making a deposit: they enjoyed all the privileges of a pious cause, under similar circum-

stances: legacies and donations to them were not subject to the ordinances of the civil law: a contract in their favour was not dissolved on failure of the final cause: an error of calculation in their favour, in a judicial sentence, was confirmed: a surety was accepted for them that would not have been for others: advocates, vassals, could plead for them, against their own lords: the testament of an excommunicated person, in their favour, could not be set aside *. Novario gives a multitude of authorities, in proof of each of these privileges, and cites facts to show their observance. Violence and injustice would, of course, frequently oppose it; but, in all such instances, and whenever the secular power was actuated by a different spirit, the exertions of the clergy, in favour of the miserable, can never be sufficiently admired. To the bishop, say ancient writers, all should fly who suffer injury. In his house there should not be, as in the house of Jove, according to the poet, whom Themistius reproves, two vessels, one containing good, the other adverse lots, but no acerbity should be found there, nor any source besides a fountain of mercy and benignity; and therefore St. Bernard calls ecclesiastical superiors mothers †. "Truly," saith he, writing to Pope Innocent, "amongst the privileges of your singular primacy, what, above all, ennobles in our eyes your apostolic power is, when you rescue the poor from the hand of the strong. In my judgment, there is no more precious jewel in your crown, than that zeal with which you are accustomed to relieve the oppressed, and to deliver the just from the rod of sinners ‡."

What an admirable spectacle is furnished by Honorius III. endeavouring to instil into the breasts of kings his own gentleness and longanimity, exhorting the king of England ut subjectos suos studeret regere in spiritu lenitatis, and the king of Bohemia, sicut regem decet, mansuetum habere animum et clementem §! What a sublime spectacle to behold the successors of the fisherman giving up whole kingdoms, rather than fail in justice to one friendless woman, and, from age to age, rejecting the offers of powerful oppressors, with that hereditary voice of their seat, Pecunia tua tecum sit in perditionem. "O

* Jo. Novarii Lucani Tract. de Privileg. Miserab. Person.
† Cresolii Anth. Sacra. ‡ Epist. cxcviii.
§ Regest. Honor. III. ix. 16. 25.

voice of thunder!" cries St. Bernard, "O voice of magnificence and virtue! at whose terror are turned back and confounded all who hate Sion." The conduct of the Roman pontiffs, alone in this respect, would be sufficient to entitle them to the eternal gratitude of mankind; but as it would be wholly impossible to do justice to it without occupying an entire volume, I shall merely allude to what was done by holy men in lower office, who meekly followed in their steps. The letters of St. Bernard to Thibaud, count of Champagne, respecting his conduct to Humbert, will convey an idea of the nature of this action in general. To this prince he writes as follows:—"I have heard that you were anxious, on occasion of our sickness, and I am not a little grateful; and in this I recognize your love for God; for how otherwise should you have condescended so much as to know such a person as myself, unless on account of God? Therefore, since it is certain that you love God, and me for his sake, I wonder that I should be repulsed by you in one little petition, which I think is neither unjust nor unreasonable. If I had sought gold or silver, or anything of that nature, truly I question not I should have received it. Sought, do I say? Nay, without seeking, I have often experienced your bounty. But why have I not deserved to succeed in this one cause, which I have asked not for my sake, but for the sake of God; not so much for me as for you from yourself? What! do you count it unworthy in me to ask, or in you to grant, mercy to a Christian accused before you, and acquitted, though not in your court? Do you not remember him who threatens, cum accepero tempus ego justitias judicabo? And if he will judge justice, how much more injuries? Or do you not fear what is written, "Quia in qua mensura mensi fueritis, remitietur vo bis? Are you not aware that, as easily as you can deprive Humbert of his inheritance, God can strip you of yours? Yea, incomparably more easily. Truly, in cases where the guilt is clear and inexcusable; so that there is no room for mercy, without endangering justice, you ought to be a vindicator, trembling and grieving, more compelled by the necessity of office, than by the desire of vindicating; but where the alleged crime is either less certain, or more excusable, you should rejoice in finding an occasion where you can exercise piety, saving justice. Lo, I admonish you this second time,

that as you wish God may have mercy on you, so should you show mercy to Humbert, whether you be moved by that sweet promise, 'Beati misericordes, quoniam ipsi misericordiam consequentur;' or intimidated by that denunciation, 'Judicium sine misericordia illi, qui non fecerit misericordiam.' Farewell *." Again, he writes to him on the same subject, and says, "I fear to be troublesome to you by these repeated solicitations; but what can I do? If I fear to offend you by writing often, how much more should I fear to offend God by not interposing for the miserable? I return you thanks for allowing me to find favour in your sight, and for permitting Humbert to refute the accusation against him, but I cannot sufficiently express my astonishment at your not having fulfilled your intention of restoring the inheritance to his wife and children, and at your pious word not having been accomplished. If we detect any light or false word in other princes, we count it a thing neither new nor strange; but from Count Thibaud, whose simple affirmation is the same as an oath, and from whom the least lie would be a grievous perjury, we cannot patiently hear yes and no. Amongst many virtues which ennoble your dignity, and render your name illustrious and celebrated through the world, what is chiefly praised, is your constancy of truth. Who, therefore, hath tried by entreaty or advice to enervate the strength of your firm bosom? Who, I say, hath attempted to annul, by fraud, so holy a resolution, so excellent, so worthy of all princes' imitation? Deceitfully, not truly, did he love you; traitorously, and not faithfully, did he advise you, endeavouring to cover, with clouds, your glorious renown for truth, and to render void the word which your mouth uttered,—word agreeable to God's worthy of you, piously just, and justly pious, by I know not what malice, seeking to injure the poor. I beseech you, by the mercy of God, to beware, lest the impious should grow proud, while the poor are prostrated; and keep the promise which you made first to the Lord Norbert, and afterwards to us, that you would restore the inheritance of Humbert to his wife and children †." In a third letter, St. Bernard exhorts the count to be ready always with more clemency and indulgence, to hear the supplications of the poor

* St. Bernard, Epist. xxxvii. † Epist. xxxviii.

people. "Lately, passing by Barrus, I met," he says, "a woman sufficiently wretched; for her soul was in bitterness, and my bowels were moved at her sorrows, and she implored me to intercede for her. She is the wife of your man Bellinus; to whom, according to the crimes that he committed, you have already rendered many and grievous things. Show her mercy, that God may have mercy on you: at all events, let not her and the innocent children suffer for the iniquity of the father. It is just, that whatever has been taken from them should be restored *." We find him afterwards writing to Gaufrid, bishop of Chartres, to entreat that he would intercede with Count Thibaud for Humbert, as all his own efforts to serve him had proved ineffectual †. Another letter, which he addresses to the bishop of Soissons, concludes with a beautiful exhortation to labour in the cause of mercy:—"I seek suppliantly, I seek earnestly, I seek in season, and out of season, not what would be unworthy of you to grant, or what I might repent having received; for if you will deliver a poor from a powerful man, you will confer on us a great benefit, and a still greater on yourself ‡." The monk of Monte-cassino says of Pope Leo, that he repaired to Amalphi, in order to persuade the Normans to refrain from cruelty, and to cease from molesting the poor; showing them how God is persecuted when the poor are persecuted, and how God is pleased, when good is done to the poor §. The only question which Guy de Roye, archbishop of Sens, notices, as essential for confessors to address to such as hold the office of seigneurs, is this, "whether they extort money from poor persons ||?" an evil which some governments, in the middle ages, had effectually obviated; for we find, that at Nola, in the sixteenth century, the poor did not pay the same tax for the same objects as the rich, but that each family paid according to its means ¶. Behold, now, an example in later times, of the action of these apostolic men, whose soul-subduing tongue was as a lance to quell the mailed crest of wrong. During the period when Charles Drosius exercised a most cruel ty-

* Epist. xxxix. † Epist. lvi.
‡ Epist. ccxxvii. § L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. iii. c. 16.
|| Le Doctrinal de Sapience.
¶ Amb. Leo de Nola, lib. iii. 8. in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

ranny over the inhabitants of Monte Reale, which was then in possession of the French, Friar John, Baptist of Florence, who was residing in the convent of Capuchins, on the mount, went boldly to remonstrate with him, and threatened him with the divine vengeance if he persisted to oppress the people; but as this governor, who feared neither God nor man, persevered in his atrocious course of cruelty, the holy preacher proceeded to denounce from the pulpit his merciless acts; and when the tyrant heard of what he had said, he sent to inform him, that unless he publicly recanted those words, he would order his beard to be torn from his chin; to whom the holy man sent answer, that when his duty was concerned, he valued his life no more than the hairs of his beard, but that if he would attend at his sermon on the morrow, he should have the satisfaction which he knew would be agreeable to God. Accordingly, on the next day, Charles, surrounded by his armed soldiers, entered the Church. That man of iron soul sat in constrained silence, prepared not so much to hear the word of God, as to command a horrible crime; while his guards stood ready to watch the sign, and execute it. But, lo! the preacher had no sooner lifted up the crucifix, and uttered a short prayer, invoking the Saviour's protection, and proclaiming his resolution never to cease, but with life, to raise his voice in behalf of the poor and oppressed, than terror seized the ruthless enemy; the image of Christ seemed to frown upon him; he shuddered, and, though the friar then proceeded to declare, that the vengeance of heaven was hanging over his head, unless he made restitution to the poor, and ceased to oppress them, he had only sufficient strength to rise and wave to his satellites to follow him, leaving the multitude wrapt in admiration at the sudden and terrific spectacle of a tyrant's remorse *. From this striking example, reader, you can estimate the effects of that monastic action, which was never suspended during the middle ages. Nor can we omit to notice those remarkable fraternities which were instituted by noble men and laics, with a view to afford protection to the weak, and to redress the wrongs of the oppressed. Without entering upon the ground of old Romance, where these are seen to play so memorable a part, we meet with them

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1540.

repeatedly in the annals of history. Historians are not wanting to perpetuate the names of Catellanus Malavolta, Loderengus Andalous, Gruamons Caccianimicus, Hugolinus Lambertinus, of Bologna, Selanca Liazanus, of Reggio, and Rainerius Adelardus, of Modena, who, in the thirteenth century, founded the brotherhood of the knights of St. Mary, sanctioned by Pope Urban IV.; of which the insignia showed a purple cross on a white field, beneath two stars; and by the laws of which every member was bound to defend widows and orphans, and to promote peace as far as was in his power *. This path presents new objects of beauty and grandeur at every step, but we must press forwards hastily.

CHAPTER V.

The humanity and mercy with which the wars of the middle ages were conducted, would undoubtedly form another class of historical illustrations, on which we might be expected to dwell, if there were not so many topics, still more intimately connected with our argument, remaining as yet unnoticed, the length of which admonishes us to turn our steps from ground that has been frequently explored; and there is no want of guides when we pass near battle fields, and enter within the confines of mere secular history. The facts here also are well known, and generally uncontroverted. A modern author indeed affirms, that it is a gross abuse of language to call a warrior merciful; but in the very work in which that sentence occurs, one may remark that he is obliged to record instances of the most tender compassion exercised in war; and though a hatred of war was undoubtedly characteristic of innumerable heroes, who were celebrated in the middle ages, the same men were able to demonstrate in their deeds, that mercy, in the most sovereign degree, may distinguish those who are constrained, by the circumstances of the times, to engage in it. The

* Sigonii de Episcop. Bonov. lib. i.

proposition, therefore, as general, cannot be admitted, with such facts before us as are attested by history.

Horrors and cruelty have at all times attended the collision of hostile armies; but certainly that reckless sacrifice of human life in furtherance of an important object, that cool calculation of consequences in consigning to destruction friends or enemies, of which so many instances can be produced from the annals of modern warfare, did not belong to the military character of the period in question. On the contrary, the ancient annals record numerous examples of commanders being willing to forego great advantages, rather than fail in mercy towards those opposed to them, of which one very memorable instance occurred, during the siege of Rheims by the English, when the Castle of Cormicy, defended by Henri de Noir, and a troop of archers from that city, was besieged by Bartholomew de Brunes, an English nobleman. A mine having been secretly made by the English pioneers, their commander, being sure of its effect, sent a summons to Henry to surrender. This brave knight, being ignorant of the danger, was amused at the proposition. "We are well provided," said he, "with all things, and you desire us to surrender; it shall never be so." The English commander, who could not endure to destroy these brave men, invited him to come out under a safe conduct, that he might judge of the peril with his own eyes. His resolution was changed when he beheld the tower undermined, and the walls only supported by beams of timber, which had been placed to prop them up. He surrendered, and was no sooner come out with all his troops, than the fire was set to the props, and the tower shortly opened into two parts, and fell to the ground. This conduct of the English knight was the more noble, as the citizens of Rheims, during the war, had shown the greatest animosity against the English.

When Duke Robert, and Richard, Prince of Capua, besieged Salerno, which the ferocious Prince Gisolfe defended, the sufferings of the inhabitants, through hunger and misery, are described by the Monk of Monte Cassino as resembling those experienced, during the siege of Jerusalem, by the Romans. The interests of humanity required that an end should be put to the horrible despotism of Gisolfe, by winning the town, so that these sufferings were unavoidable; but the Norman Prince, never-

theless, found occasion to evince mercy to vast numbers while persevering in their laudable enterprise. Two young men on this occasion, followed by a dog, contrived to escape from the city, and came to where the duke was, and begged bread for God's sake, which was given to them, and the boys gave a third part of it to their dog; and the dog that evening ran back to the city, carrying the bread to their father's house, and placed it at his feet, and then returned to the lads. And the next day they had bread enough, and gave more to the dog, though they knew not what he had done with it before; and the next evening, again, the dog carried it to their father, and the third day likewise; and the father believing that some Christian sent him this bread for the love of God, tied a card round the dog's neck, on which he wrote, "I thank God for him who has given me these alms, and I cease not to pray to God for him." With this the dog returned, and when the boys had read the card, they carried the dog, having it still hanging from his neck, to the duchess; but she would not believe their report. However, she caused a little sack of bread to be fastened to the dog; and the dog seemed to be afraid of the people, as if he expected to be accused before the Prince; but, after sunset, as usual, he set off, and carried the bread to the city; and on his return another card was found, on which was written, "Greater thanks I render thee for these greater alms." At length the Prince heard of this circumstance: by his orders the dog was slain, and his master cast into prison, and put to a cruel death *. Towards the conclusion of the siege the Duke gave a memorable example of the mercy, which was spoken of above, which the historian, after describing the enfeebled state of the garrison, proceeds to relate in these terms:— "The Duke saw that he could take the city by force; but fearing to cause the death of the inhabitants, and lest the poor people should lose their houses, he would not do so, though he desired above all things to put an end to the misery within the city, which was soon afterwards delivered to him by means of a citizen †."

Every one has heard of the bell which used to be sounded by the Florentines, in the middle ages, during a whole month before entering upon a campaign, in order to give

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. viii. c. 19. † Ibid. liv. viii.

warning to their enemies, that they might be prepared for what was coming. Machiavelli confesses, in his History of Florence, that such acts attest the prevalence of great generosity and virtue. The text of the Coutume de Beauvaisis, written towards the end of the thirteenth century, relative to the formalities which were to be observed before commencing private wars, furnishes another instance of the same spirit: 'Qui autrui vient mettre en guerre par paroles, il ne les doit pas dire doubles ne couvertes, mais si clers et si apertes que chil a qui les paroles sont dites ou envoiées sache que il convient, que il se gart. Et qui autrement le feroit se seroit traison*.'"

Who has not heard also of the extraordinary scenes presented even on the field of battle, when both armies have spared their enemies, and that avowedly from a motive of compassion, and through a horror of shedding blood? In the celebrated battle of Brenneville, in the twelfth century, Orderic Vitalis says, that there were but three men killed †. Some scruple always remained after "destroying the creature of God, whom they could not resuscitate." A modern historian observes, that the type of a King of France was a saint ‡, that is, a man piteous and holy, who would say, with the Emperor Louis the Pious, "I do not wish that any one, on account of me, should lose life or member §." The Monk of Monte Cassino, describing the victory of the Normans over the Longobards, who, trusting in their superior numbers, had threatened not to leave one of them alive, after relating that the rout and confusion of the enemy was complete, adds, "The Norman conquerors showed such mercy in this battle, that although the enemies' camp contained 2,500 foot soldiers, they would not touch one of them ‖." The historians of the middle age have been accused of inhumanity, and indifference to the fate of the common soldiers, because they seldom enter into any details respecting their fate; but surely a charge of this kind, upon such grounds, is most unreasonable and ridiculous. How could these chroni-

* Beaumanoir, Coutume Beauvaisis, c. 59, p. 30.
† Hist. Norm. lib. xii.
‡ Michelet, Introduct. à l'Hist. Univ.
§ Thegani de Gestis Ludov. 42.
‖ L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. i. c. 32.

clers have discovered a different method of describing wars from what had been followed by all writers preceding them? In this instance it was necessity, and not inhumanity, which made them follow in the steps of Homer, who never speaks of the common crowd, but only brings the chiefs upon the scene. Then, again, what an admirable spirit of mercy distinguished conquerors! It entered into the definition of a great captain in the middle ages to notice his propensity to mercy; as when the old historian of Normandy says of Duke Richard, "La miséricorde de lo duc estoit moult grande *." And the author of the Chronicle of Robert Guiscart records of him, "Lo conte avoit en soi toute pitié et misericorde †."

St. Epiphanius relates, that the Bishop of Paris was sent as ambassador from Italy to Gundobad, King of Burgundy, for the purpose of redeeming prisoners, and that he spoke with such moving eloquence, that the conqueror restored them all to liberty without ransom ‡.

What a contrast was here to the heroes of the civilized nations of antiquity, with whom it was the custom to brand their prisoners of war with a hot iron. The Athenians marked their Samian prisoners with the figure of a ship, and the Samians marked their Athenian prisoners with that of an owl §.

The impious Emperor Frederick II. indeed, when he ravaged Italy in 1238, and committed such slaughter, that, as he said himself, the provinces were not vast enough to furnish graves for those whom the fury of his soldiers sacrificed to his vengeance against Gregory IX., revived this custom of heathen warfare; for he made the sign of a cross with a hot iron on the foreheads of all his prisoners. But such an act was only in accordance with the character of an infidel, who led troops of Saracens and heretics against the church. Prisoners of war in our chivalrous ages could never furnish themes for tragic song, as in times of heroic antiquity.

King Don Alonso of Portugal having been taken prisoner in a battle by Don Fernando, King of Leon, was

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. v. c. 4.
† Chronique de Robert Viscart, liv. i.
‡ Ap. Cresolii Anth. Sac.
§ Ælian Var. Hist. lib. xi. c. 9.

treated with such humanity by him, besides being restored to liberty as soon as his wounds were healed, that on his return, through gratitude, he would gladly have resigned his kingdom into his hands; but Don Fernando contented himself with the restoration of some places which had been taken in Galicia: and the duke of Milan having taken prisoners the kings of Arragon and Navarre, gave them their liberty, without ransom or conditions, in order to gain their friendship *. The defeated are twice vanquished; for they are forced to yield the palm even of generosity: the Lady of Brescia, in whose house Bayart had been lodged on the capture of that city, on the departure of that knight from her house, wept with her daughters, as if they were to be put to death. Her last words to him were these: "Flower of chivalry, may the blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ who suffered death and passion for all sinners, reward you in this world and in the next!" When he accepted her present of 500 ducats, lest he should disoblige her, it was only to distribute them immediately among the poor nuns of the convents, which had been injured in the sack of the city. The gentleness and mercy of Louis XII. towards the vanquished cities of Italy, has been ascribed to the influence of his confessor the Dominican John Clerée; and it should be remarked, that there were few conquerors in those times who had not heard lessons of mercy and moderation from the lips of some holy friar. After the second revolt, when Genoa surrendered at discretion, Lewis XII. flushed with victory, entered the city in triumph, holding a drawn sword in his hand; but having embroidered on his coat of arms a king of the bees at the head of his swarm, and for motto these noble words, "Our king has no sting †."

During the twenty-two years in which Garsias de Loaysa, the Dominican bishop of Osma, enjoyed the favour of the Emperor Charles V. whose confessor he became in 1524, he made it his constant effort to inspire him with sentiments of goodness for his subjects, moderation and mercy towards the enemies whom he vanquished. After the battle of Pavia, when Francis I. was conducted prisoner to Madrid, Charles assembled his

* Savedra Christ. Prince, ii. 424.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'ord. S. D. tom. iii. liv. 24.

council to determine how he ought to treat his royal captive. It was the bishop's part, as chief of the council of conscience, to speak first; and though he well knew the interested views of those who would speak after him, which appeared in fact when the Chancellor Gattinara, and the Duke of Alva argued that he should be imprisoned for life, and the ambitious projects of the young emperor, who aspired to universal monarchy, and who would be now told that the only way of resisting the Turks would be by reducing Christendom under one monarch, for such was in reality the motive these counsellors assigned for their advice, nevertheless he gave his opinion, and persisted in justifying it, notwithstanding the cold and unmoved countenance with which the emperor heard him, that the King of France should be instantly set at liberty without ransom, and even without being obliged to agree to any conditions *. Even the rights with which the feudal system invested the clergy turned all to the profit of the unfortunate, and both in time of peace and of war were exercised in the cause of mercy.

Charles of Anjou, after his victory over Conradin at Tagliacozzo, was obliged to give Henri of Castille his life, because the Abbot of Monte Cassino, who had procured his arrest, would not render him excepting on that condition.

But I cannot remain here to multiply examples, which besides must present themselves in abundance to the memory of every reader of Froissart, or of our other ancient chroniclers. There is, however, one fact connected with the history of wars in general, which cannot be passed over in silence; for it is impossible not to be struck at the evidence which is presented in proof, that the humanity and compassion which formed the chivalrous character in the middle ages, was the result of the principles of the Catholic religion, emanating from the church, and diffused through society by the institutions which it inspired. Without recurring to the history of warfare in Pagan times, we need only cast a glance at the two parties, which were opposed to each other at first in the east, and subsequently in the north, to feel the whole force of this observation. Saladin, we are told by mo-

* Id. tom. iv. liv. 26.

dern writers, was of a noble and generous nature; but what mercy did he show towards the vanquished?

After the terrible battle near the lake of Tiberias, in which he defeated the crusaders, when Guy de Lusignan was made prisoner, the captive king was accommodated with a tent by order of Saladin. Having been given some wine that had been cooled in snow, the unfortunate Lusignan presented the cup to the Lord of Carac; but Saladin held back his hand, exclaiming that a traitor like him should not drink in his presence. The menaces with which these words were followed, enraged Renaud; and he manifested his contempt for them as if he had been still at liberty, and in his own good castle. Then Saladin struck his unarmed and defenceless prisoner with his sword, and suffered his guards to slay him before his face. The following day, a scene of greater horror took place. The conqueror, seated on a throne, and surrounded by Emirs, and the most learned men of his court, summoned before him the Hospitallers and Templars, and, as a particular honour, gave his counsellors the privilege of each killing a captive with his own hands.

If we turn to the north, after the departure of Catholicism, and consider the spirit with which hostilities were conducted between states professing Christianity, we shall find that the epoch of the change of religion in the sixteenth century, was distinguished also as forming the commencement of a new military æra utterly unlike all that had preceded it. The religious wars against the catholics in Germany, Holland, and France, were characterized by a ferocity to which no parallel can be found in the annals of the world. All the atrocities recorded of the heathen hostilities, and all the prodigious cruelties that can be ascribed by the imagination to the hordes of savages, were surpassed by our militant reformers. It was a new voice to these regions of the earth, when the men whom Luther styled the prophets of murder, raised the cry which found such fearful echoes in the breasts of an infuriated population, On, on, on! Be without pity, when Esau shall give you good words. Hear not the groans of the impious; they will supplicate you very tenderly; they will weep like children. Be not touched; slay, and let not the sword dyed in blood have time to cool.

Hence it was, that the horrors perpetrated in Rome, when sacked by the Lutheran and mercenary troops of the Emperor, exceeded all that had ever been suffered by that city on the eight different occasions when she fell into the hands of an enemy. Mercy indeed was not much to be expected from a leader such as George de Frundsberg, chief of the German troops, who had been heard to swear repeatedly that he would strangle the Pope with the gold chain which he wore round his neck, or from troops, some of whom, as the author of a Lutheran history relates, used to boast that they would soon eat a piece of his flesh. Even against each other the Reformers contended with unsparing rage. On the revolt of the peasants in Germany, Luther charged the Elector Frederick and Duke John, to shew them no mercy. The peasants he said, deserved no tolerance, but the indignation of God and men: "they are under the ban, and they may be treated as mad dogs." Those who combatted under the antient standard, needed no instruction to convince them that cruelty could not be combined with piety, and that the paternosters of the constable Anne de Montmorency were execrable. The writers of the middle age were all well assured that David, in speaking of overthrowing enemies, meant the victory over sins; and that, as Paschal remarks, both Moses and Isaiah had used the term in the same sense; therefore, in no manual of warriors, in no chivalrous romance, in no book of any description, of the middle ages, will you discover the slightest trace of the spirit of the reformed captains, who made such strange and fearful use of the ancient Testament. But even without referring to wars professedly religious, it is certain that, wherever the Catholic code had ceased to influence men in military authority, there was never ground for astonishment, on finding the fairest laurels stained by some opprobrious note, of having failed in mercy, if not through blind caprice, at least through an inflexible adherence to some false idea of justice, national honour, or general expediency.

But it is useless to incur odium by pulling down vain trophies, which must one day fall of themselves, if the minds which now cling to them should ever be taught to appreciate true glory. Here let us stop. The path is slippery, and can lead to nothing worthy: all blessed

things visibly droop and wither, as we advance on it; it is enough to have marked the limits; let us sign our breasts and return.

CHAPTER VI.

Intolerance, that so ill agrees with mercy, has been ascribed by the common voice of modern schools to the Catholic society of the middle ages. It will be necessary, therefore, to examine upon what grounds that accusation rests; and for this purpose there is nothing more urgent, in the first instance, than to form a clear idea of the sense in which the word is used by those who bring it forward; for if they understand it as implying that the men of those times believed one religion to be true, and but one,—believed that it was the duty of those who adhered to that faith to endeavour by all means consistent with free will, to convert men to it, and to incorporate all of human kind into the one body which professed it,—the charge is true. But if they intended to signify that the believing men of yore deemed it reasonable and just to use force in purging the world from errors, so as to compel all waverers to believe, and hold fast the Catholic faith, and to punish them with the temporal sword if they did not believe and hold it fast, the accusation involves an absurdity, as well as an historical falsification, and can only convict those who support it of having formed an erroneous and distorted view of the character of past times.

On the first of these suppositions, therefore, the truth of the charge being admitted, if we proceed to inquire what inference it will justify, respecting the mercy of men in the ages of faith, setting passion and prejudice aside, we shall find that it will warrant no other conclusion, but that they were strictly and in genuine simplicity Christian times, and precisely in part because that charge is true. The Christian religion was not a system of eclectic philosophy; it was a deposit, once delivered authoritatively from heaven, and to be transmitted afterwards by divinely commissioned men, without addition, diminution, or change whatever, to the end of time. It

rested wholly on the doctrine clearly and repeatedly announced by its Divine Founder, that all those men who did not believe and receive it would perish. It was the sole way of deliverance vouchsafed to the human race. How then could men who really had faith, arrive at the contrary conclusion, that it was a point to be determined by individual inquiry, a subject for progressive development, that all men had an equal claim to the title of its disciples, whether they persevered or not in the doctrine of its authorized teachers, and however widely they might be separated from them, that it was capable of being divided into many religions, all differing from each other, both in principles of belief and practice, in doctrine as well as discipline, and that the virtue of tolerance, equivalent with charity and mercy, required them to give countenance and support to those who acted in accordance with such views? Evidently this was what men who had faith could never do. They might renounce their faith, they might approach the Christian religion as the ancient philosophers approached the school of some famous teacher of wisdom, and say, we approve of such and such parts, and we must reject such other parts, by this very act of choice and selection, according to the concurrent voice of all the first ages, proclaiming themselves to be no longer implicit followers of the apostolic instruction, and consequently no longer persons belonging to the Church instituted by Christ the Saviour, but never, while persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, could they mistake such toleration, full of cruelty, for the charity of the gospel. "Ista caritas," says St. Bernard, "destruit caritatem; hæc discretio discretionem confundit *."

It is an error to suppose that discretion of this kind is the result of any progress of philosophy in modern times. St. Augustin says that the devil, on seeing the temples of the demons become deserted, moved the heretics, who, under the name of Christians, should resist the Christian doctrine, as if they could indifferently, without any correction, be contained in the city of God, in like manner, as the city of confusion had indifferently contained philosophers, entertaining amongst themselves different and adverse opi-

* Apolog. ad Guil. 8.

nions; "therefore," adds St. Augustin, "if any persons in the Church of Christ should teach any thing morbid or bad, and should contumaciously refuse to amend their dogmas, and should persist in defending them, they become heretics, and must be driven out into the ranks of the enemy *." Christian antiquity had but one voice to assent to this doctrine. Clearly, however, as Bossuet remarks, "what rendered the Church so odious to those who protested against the ancient faith was, more than any thing else, this holy and inflexible incompatibility with error; it was because it wished to be alone—because it believed itself the spouse, title which admits of no partition. This was, in fact, what rendered it so severe, so unsociable, and so odious to the separated sects, which at first asked for nothing else but that she would not strike them with her anathemas; but her holy severity and inflexibility, which caused her to be hated by schismatics, rendered her dear and venerable to the children of God †."

Moreover, another source of terror and jealousy to all excluded persons is the discovery that the Catholic religion must always seek to proselytize, and in this they only discern with accuracy what is its real character; for the spirit of the Church is essentially conquering to conquer. Like him, of whom it is said, every man's hand was against him, and his hand against every man; so it is not to make peace that it hath been established on earth, but rather that it should produce hostility, as its Divine Founder predicted;—a war, too, it must be confessed, in which all the advantages are against its adversaries; for there is a power invisible, sooner or later sent forth to strike down every lofty thing that rises against it, and to bring into its subjection even the thoughts and imaginations of the human heart—war—to the conflict of man with man, of master with his own household, of sons with their own father—war to the knife's point, as it were, according to the image of that Spanish theologian who entitles his great work in proof of religion, "The Dagger of Faith"—war never-ending, constantly in action, as long as the human race exists upon the earth, and always on the same unequal terms;

* De Civitate Dei, liv. xviii. 51.

† Hist. de Variat. VI. avert.

those who are ranged under the banner of Catholicism having at their exclusive disposal a prodigious power, an instrument of inconceivable, divine perfection, the secret of which no genius or indefatigable malice of their adversaries can ever discover. Do you ask what this may be? It is taken from the altar; it is a consecrated weapon; its form is now antiquated, and will only cause a smile to those who have not felt its power; for the Church vanquishes by repeating the combat of her protomartyr Stephen, who had charity for arms, and by that conquered all things.

Already here is more than sufficient to explain the cry of intolerance which assails us on all sides whenever the Catholic religion is named; and yet, so clear and irresistible was the truth on which these views were founded, that all these societies, which separated themselves into distinct communions, agreed in admitting it; for they only differed from the Catholic church in affirming that they were the members who truly constituted that one mystical body; but never did any of them practically adopt the conclusion that all formed integral parts of it, and that it was therefore immaterial, or a matter not of essential concern to what side men joined themselves; of which fact the proof may be seen at any time in their confessions of faith and symbolical books, all of which maintain what is termed the doctrine of exclusive salvation; though modern orators and authors, with incredible levity and inconsideration, persist in ascribing it as a distinctive feature to the faith of the Catholic church. Such being, then, the conviction of Catholics, it was clearly the very dictate of mercy, in its most purified and exalted sense, which led them to the conclusion that it was their imperative duty, both as members of this divine society and as men, to endeavour to recall back to it all persons who had been induced to forsake it, as well as to impart its advantages to all who were afar off, even to the universal race of men. Had they been wanting in respect to this sentiment, they would be the proper objects for the abhorrence of all subsequent generations who admitted the truth of the Christian religion. They would have left an eternal fame, to prove how far it was possible for the human intelligence to fall from the grace of mercy, and to lose every benign feature of its Maker's image. But in this respect the men of the middle ages

were not wanting; and the proofs of the fact, which can be derived from ancient sources, ought to form to a philosophic mind, that loveth love and mercy, one of the most delightful fruits of historic investigation.

St. Clemens Alexandrinus relates a tradition of the apostle Mathias, that he used to remind every one that if the neighbour of one of the elect had sinned, that elect person had sinned; for if he had acted as he ought, he would have preserved his neighbour from sinning *. Immeasurable, certainly, is the distance between such a doctrine and the sentiment of many schools at present; but the mercy and charity of the middle ages, as witnessed in a St. Benedict or a St. Francis, would have acquiesced in it at once; for it would never have allowed men to feel content with being instructed and holy in their own manners, without endeavouring, though at the risk of incurring personal danger, to admonish, instruct, and reform others over whom they might have authority. "Let no one, brethren," said St. Bernard, "dissemble and flatter sins; let no one say, Am I my brother's guardian? Let no one be indifferent when he sees decay of discipline; for to be silent when you can admonish, is to consent to sin; and we know that they who commit sin, and they who consent to it, will be punished alike †."

But, in remarking that the men of faith knew it to be their duty to use all means for this purpose, I added, "consistent with the free-will of the persons whom they wished to convert;" and this leads us to the second stage of the inquiry which is here instituted.

In making the will of man free, it pleased his Creator to endue him with the power of rejecting or of accepting the favours, whether of a temporal or of a spiritual order, which would be placed before him; and therefore, so far, unquestionably man possesses from nature the right, if it can be so termed, of forfeiting salvation and of denying the truth, which was revealed for his deliverance. Beyond this sad privilege, the word liberty of conscience, as a maxim of genuine Christianity, independent of the power of men to punish, can mean nothing. Has man liberty of conscience from God to hear or to reject the Church? Unquestionably, in submission to the unsearchable mys-

* Stromat. liv. vii. 13.

† Serm. in Nat. S. Joan. Bapt.

teries of divine grace, he has that liberty. Has he liberty of conscience from God to hear or to reject the Church, and, in the latter event, to continue still a true member of the Church, and retain all his title to its privileges? With equal certainty we must reply in the negative to this proposition. Has he, then, liberty of conscience from the Church—that is, may he refuse to hear and obey her decisions, and continue to be a member of her communion? A negative must again be returned, and with the same assurance of truth and justice. What, then, is the Church to do to prevent him from exercising this privilege, to which he lays claim? Is she to force him to hear her—to compel him to believe? How could such an idea be ever entertained, since the Church has no authority to take away what God has granted? and we have seen that he has granted to man the free power of receiving or rejecting his offers of grace. "Those who are compelled to enter," says Hugo of St. Victor, "are those who, broken by adversities, are corrected from sins and led back to the love of God *." Such was the interpretation put upon those words in the middle ages. But upon what shadow of ground can any one question the right of the Church to put in execution the divine decree, and in conformity with the express and absolute commission which she has so solemnly received, to separate from her fold those impure and lifeless members which might spread contagion and death through the ranks of others who continued faithful? As opposed to the general conviction of the existence of this right, we may. with Pelisson, style "liberty of conscience a fatal word, unknown to all Christian antiquity, which nothing but the fury of civil wars, bloody battles, and the overthrow of legitimate authority, have introduced in later times. In astronomy or physics," continues this philosopher, "it was lawful to follow one's own opinion; but when was it ever permitted either to do in the republic or to believe in the Church whatever one chose? Such boundless liberty is a chimera or a servitude †."

The human soul, easily snared by the flavour of some

* Hugo St. Vict. Allegor. in Lucam, lib. iv. c. 20.

† Reflexions sur les Differends de la Religion. Reponse aux Objections, xiv.

slight good, with fondness would pursue destruction, if no guide recall, no rein direct, her wandering course. Hence the wise poet of ages skilled in wisdom, reminds men that it behoves the law should be a curb, the government a mark, whose borrowed light might show at least the fortress and main tower of the true city.

If we proceed now to inquire what were the consequences, during the middle ages, of men exercising this liberty of forsaking the communion of the faithful, the question acquires a more complex character, inasmuch as there were two distinct powers concerned. In relation to interests of a spiritual order, the measures adopted emanated solely from the religious authority; but the state which at one time sought impunity for its own crimes, and with that view, as in the acts of Henry II. of England, desired to deprive the Church of the liberty of excommunication, which no human power can ever take from it, and which at another deemed the protection of the people from error in matters of faith an object intimately connected with its own interests, was not slow to interfere, on these occasions, and with whatever motive, in a manner equally opposed in most instances to what was recommended and required by the Church. This explains such facts as that presented in the eleventh year of Henry III., when a writ was sent to the Lord Justice of Ireland, commanding him to aid the episcopal excommunications with the secular arm, as in England was used. In human affairs, indeed, the most salutary regulations are often evaded or defied; and as a recent historian of the middle ages remarks, in excusing the practice which then prevailed, power will often decide where these obligations have nothing beyond conscience to enforce them. Hence the fathers of councils were frequently compelled to invoke the secular arm for the execution of their decrees; but by degrees the civil power usurped the spiritual. The witena-gemot, being solicited to chastise such as despised the observance of Lent, or such as neglected to baptize their children, soon considered ecclesiastical penalties as much its province as those incurred by a violation of civil law. Thus, by the laws of the Saxon states, if a man neglected to baptize within the first month, he paid a fine of thirty shillings. If the child died after that period, without the regenerating rite, his whole property was forfeited,

to be employed for the relief of the poor and other holy works. In fine, there was scarcely a commandment in the decalogue, the violation of which did not fall within the cognizance of the civil tribunals, so blended were they with the ecclesiastical. The civil rulers, it is true, might have appealed to the judgment of the ancient wise, and said in justification of themselves, "He who does not forbid sin when he has the power, enjoins it;" but the legislation in later times, in respect to such offences, enforced by the civil tribunals of France and England, was so far from being in harmony with the spiritual authority, that there are repeated instances of its being denounced by the clergy as opposed to the Christian mildness; and the authorized guides of men could never with impunity take part in the judgment of the secular courts. Dominique de Florence, archbishop of Toulouse, was appointed, in 1419, president of the parliament of Toulouse, on the accession of Charles VII. In that same year, on the 30th of July, the parliament (the archbishop presiding with five clerical and six laical counsellors) sentenced a man to be decapitated for blasphemy. The severity of the Gallican tribunals was well known; but the public was filled with astonishment, that the archbishop and the five clerks should have despised the laws of the Church, by rendering such a sentence. The clergy of Toulouse, both secular and regular, immediately separated themselves from his communion, and declared that, by becoming irregular, he had lost his spiritual jurisdiction. In vain did he attempt to justify himself from the pulpit of his metropolitan church, clad in his pontifica s, citing the examples of Moses and of Phineas, and threatening the disobedient with excommunication. The cause was laid before the Pope, who deputed Guillaume de Chalançon, bishop of Pui, to take informations on the spot, and send the result to Rome. The Pope reserved the decision to himself, but granted to an apostolic commissioner the power of absolving the archbishop and the five clerks, *ad cautelam* and in secret, which he exercised, it is said, in November, 1422; when it is supposed the archbishop and clergy were reconciled, the former resigning the office of president into the hands of the Dauphin *. The

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 18.

penalties which the Church inflicted were, undoubtedly, severe and fearful to persons who had faith, but men who had no regard to the words of Jesus Christ could not consistently complain; for according to their principles they must have appeared null and powerless. They consisted either in excommunication, which was a formal exclusion of the individual from the spiritual advantages of the Christian Church, to which he was not restored until after having complied or pledged himself to comply with the conditions required by the canons, or else in simple admonitions and exhortations.

The ancient discipline recognizes a twofold excommunication, mortal and medicinal; to the former of which belong the horror of solemnities publicly revealing it *. In the interests of peace, the Church was often obliged to have recourse to both. In the year 992, to restrain military rapine, Alduin, bishop of Limoges, ordained, that divine worship should cease in parish churches and monasteries; which decree he deemed equivalent to an excommunication †. A few years later, several men of arms were excommunicated by name: a solemn curse was pronounced against themselves, their abettors, their arms, their horses; and torches were dashed upon the ground, and extinguished, while the clergy prayed that, in like manner, might their joy perish in the sight of angels, unless they made restitution, and ceased to oppress the poor. The deprivation of funeral rites, the administration of which by rebellious hands is justly deemed, by the faithful, a barbarous infliction on the surviving friends, as well as an insult to the dead, when ordained by Catholic authority, was deemed part of the penalty of such one as, in contumacy, died against the holy Church. We find it decreed, at the synod of Ries, in 1284, that no bier should even be borne before the house of persons excommunicated ‡. In such a refusal, however, there was no ground for an accusation, unless it be intolerance, to refrain from observing a mere senseless formality, such as would be the funeral rites of the Catholic Church, if celebrated over the bodies of persons who, while alive, had set no value on the privilege of

* Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. lib. iv. tit. 18.
† Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 512.
‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 81.

belonging to her communion, or who, perhaps, had died in the commission of the very acts which they knew were equivalent with a wilful rejection of her authority. An example of a general interdict occurs in the twenty-ninth canon, styled "of the Apostles *." It never excluded what was necessary for the condition of the sick, and infants. During an interdict, the Franciscans could celebrate solemnly on the festivals of St. Francis, St. Bonaventura, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Louis, St. Bernardine of Sienna, St. Clare, St. Elizabeth, and the martyrs of the order †. In many convents and hospitals, as in that of St. Thomas, at Caen, and St. John, at Angers, it was permitted, during an interdict, to celebrate the divine office with closed doors, and without bells in an undertone, all interdicted persons being excluded ‡. Many prelates, as those who held the sees of Canterbury, London, Ely, and Worcester, obtained permission to celebrate mass once every week in their cathedrals §. An instance recorded in an ancient chronicle, will serve to illustrate the order of proceeding in particular cases, when excommunication was inflicted; and the result may lead the most prejudiced to suspect, that it was not the clergy on such occasions who were necessarily the persecutors. "In the diocese of Argentine, in Alsace, there was a town called Barra, inhabited by good men; and there was," continues the ancient chronicler, "a young priest, who served that parish. But there was in the town a man who served his passions, rather than his duty; for it was usual with him, when Advent, or Lent, or any days of fast came in the course of the year, to have no wish to fast, but he would take with him two or three others, and enter a tavern, and there, openly before all the people, eat and drink to intoxication. The priest, observing that he caused others to sin, and that many were scandalized through him, took him aside privately, and remonstrated with him; but he said that he would not fast, because God had made bread and wine, and other victuals, that men might use them as they liked. The priest, after repeated admonitions in private, resolved

* Coteler. tom. i. p. 447.
† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. lib. iv. tit. xix.
‡ Inn. III. Epist. lib. xi. 61; xiii. 51.
§ Epist. lib. xi. 214. 217.

to summon him in face of the Church, that he might be judged by the parishioners: he came, accordingly, and in face of the Church, repeated the same defence, that God wished men to use his gifts when, and how, and where they might choose. The soldiers, and other prudent men with whom the Church was then filled to an overflow, argued with him as to his daring to utter such vain words in face of the Church. The priest reminded him, that he ought to stand by the decision of the Church; but when he had in vain admonished him thrice, he proceeded to excommunicate him, and obliged him to leave the Church. It happened soon after, that on the vigil of the holy apostles, Simon and Jude, the priest, going to the Church to perform the divine office, was seen by the excommunicated man and his accomplices, who were sitting carousing at the entrance of the tavern cellar. The priest had just entered the cemetery, when they rose up and came upon him; and he that was excommunicated ran him through with a weapon, which one of his comrades gave him for the purpose. The priest lived to receive the body and blood of our Lord, and then rendered his soul to heaven as a true martyr *." In the event of mortal excommunication being inflicted, the social position of the sufferer undoubtedly underwent a fearful change; but it should be observed, that the consequence was inevitable, and could not be prevented either by the Church or the state, without doing violence to the express injunction of the holy Scripture, issued not to meet a particular emergency, but to be a general rule for the observance of all Christians to the end of time. The solemn charge of St. Paul, "Hæreticum hominem, post unam et secundam correptionem devita†;" and that precept of blessed John, the apostle of love, "Si quis venit ad vos, et hanc doctrinam non affert, nolite recipere eum in domum, nec ave ei dixeritis ‡," could never yield, during ages of faith, to the contrary prescription of any human notions of liberality, however plausible. True, when there was a disposition to disobey them, they were enforced by apostolic mandate, as may be witnessed in the letters of Pope Innocent III. to the bishops of London, Ely, and Worces-

* Chronicon Senon. lib. v. cap. 2. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iii.

† Ad Philem. ‡ Epist. B. Joan. ii. 1.

ter, and to the archbishop of Thebes *; but what else could the Church do? Who denies that, in many instances, the sufferers might have deep claims on the esteem and commiseration of the generous and good? But does not the very fact of the nobleness of their nature render more visible the obligation of the Church to exercise real mercy towards them? Does it not prove that they were, therefore, the men whom she was, in a more particular manner, bound to correct; for how otherwise could they be restored to the peace and love of God?

The Church would do violence to no one, nor compel any one to embrace her doctrine; but she always wished that her children should be separated from those who propagated errors against faith, lest, as St. Jerome says, "one infected animal should spread infection through the entire fold †." Her pale was wide, indeed, so that St. Bernard says, "We must go out of the world, if we wish to fly from all the evil whom the Church tolerates ‡." There was no danger in receiving any one whom the Church received; but in order that the minds of Catholics might not be perverted, she ordained that men who formally opposed her should be excluded from their society, and not allowed to instil their opinions into unguarded breasts §. In the first place, as Pope Victor III. said of the schismatics of his time, "to believe even that such men could be priests, was altogether to err. Penance and communion should be received from no one but from a Catholic; but if there should be no Catholic priest, it was more fitting to remain without a visible communion, and to communicate invisibly from the Lord's hand, rather than to receive communion from a heretic, and be separated from God; for although, in consequence of surrounding heretics," says Victor, "the Catholics cannot have the sacred communion of Christ visibly and corporally, yet, whilst united in mind and body with Christ, they have the sacred communion of Christ invisibly ||." In a word, the maxim of ages of faith, in all such cases, was that of St. Augustin, "Non habemus

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. xi. 214. xv. 28.
† Comment. in Epist. ad Galat. cap. 5. 9. ‡ Epist. ccclxiii.
§ Joan. Devoti Institut. Canonic. lib. iv. tit. 6.
|| Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. lib. iii. c. 72.

partem cum iis qui faciunt partem *." But this was not all: for the separation was not confined to the strict limits of religious worship. Clemens, the disciple of Peter, expressly says, "remove impenitent eclectics from the society of the faithful; for these pretenders to wisdom, who affect to be pious, corrupt the flock, and follow a way which, though it may seem right to some, leads in the end to death †." By the canons of the council of Epaone, in 517, priests are forbidden to assist at the repasts of obstinate heretics, and the prohibition extended to the laity, who were to keep aloof from the society of all persons who had personally been separated from the Church by a formal sentence. St. Gregory, of Tours, relates an anecdote, which will show the prevailing sentiments of his age in this respect. "Heresy," saith he, "is always hostile to Catholics, and never loses an occasion of laying snares for them. There was a certain woman, a Catholic, who had a husband that was a heretic, to whom, when a Catholic priest used to come, she being very Catholic, used to say to her husband, 'I pray your benevolence, that for the sake of this priest, who is come to visit me, there may be a joyful reception for him in our house, that we may give him a good supper;' when her husband used to consent. Now, on one of these occasions, there happened to arrive a heretic priest, upon which the husband said to his wife, 'Our joy is now double, because priests of both religions are in our house.' So they sat down to meat, and the husband placed his priest on his right hand, and the Catholic priest on his left; and he said to the heretic priest, 'If you consent to what I propose, we shall play a merry trick on this priest of the Romans, [exercemus hodie cachinnum de hoc Romanorum Presbytero,] and this will consist in your being quick to sign all the dishes as soon as they are placed before us; for, by so doing, we shall feast joyously, and he will sit in sadness;' and he answered, 'I will do what you propose.' So, when the first dish was brought, he signed it immediately; and the woman perceiving it, said, 'Do not so, for by this I shall commit an ungrateful injury against my priest;' but the second and third dish arriving in succession, the heretic priest did the same as be-

* C. Schisma, 27. † Apost. Const. vi. 18.

fore, and in like manner with the fourth *." The zeal, the delicate honour, the deep sense of fidelity, which actuated so many men during ages of faith, demanded even more than what the Church required; so that when heresy was permitted to infect a whole country, multitudes of its Catholic inhabitants went into voluntary exile. St. Peter Nolasco, while a youth, having lost his parents, felt such a horror for the heresy of the Albigenses, which then desolated part of France, that he left his country, after dividing his inheritance, and passed into Spain to Montserrat. In like manner, as we observed in a former book, many Catholic nobles and others abandoned these islands on the change of religion, and ended their days in France, Belgium, or Italy. Robert Malusvicinus being about to inhabit an estate in the south of France, which had been infected by the Manichæan heresy, besought Pope Innocent III. that he would order his legate, the abbot of Citeaux, to depute some monk, or secular priest, to accompany him, by whose counsel and ministry, in hearing confessions, he and his wife might be directed in the way of salvation, as long as they remained in that country; and we have the reply of the pontiff granting his humble petition †. The faithful regarded the heretics as traitors against the highest King: they deemed no act extravagant which could mark their detestation of such ingratitude; and it is curious to trace, in many ecclesiastical decrees, a disposition to meet this high sentiment even on its own ground of chivalrous sensibility; as when Pope Innocent III. commanded, that the houses in which any Paterans had been received should be demolished to their foundations, and never rebuilt, since they had been the haunts of the perfidious ‡; and as in the decree which prohibited the clergy from accepting their alms or oblations, on pain of suspension, which was to be for ever, unless revoked with the special consent of the apostolic see. Historically considered, the practice of Catholics in the middle ages, in respect to persons excommunicated, was only in strict conformity with the traditionary manners which had come down from the primitive Christians, as

* S. Greg. Turonens. Miracul. lib. i. c. 80.
† Epist. tom. iii. lib. xii. 131.
‡ Gesta Innocentii III. Epist. lib. x. c. 130.

may be witnessed in the work of Fleury, who shows how they refrained from eating with them, stopped their ears to the discourse of heretics, fled from their company, or performed penance, in order to be reconciled when they had been joined to it *. St. Athanasius says of St. Anthony, that he never had any commerce with the Meletian schismatics, nor with the Manichæans, nor with any other heretics; for he believed and affirmed, that their friendship and familiarity involved the death of the soul." St. Irenæus, after relating how St. John, the evangelist, fled from Cerinthus, adds, "such fear had the apostles and their disciples to communicate, or even exchange a word with those who adulterated truth †."

Viewed with the eyes of faith, there was nothing in the spirit or letter of the ecclesiastical discipline opposed to mercy; for where was the intolerance or cruelty in withdrawing in humble silence, in the spirit of peace and self-renouncement, from the ranks of a gay and a scornful opposition to the society of the obedient, meek, and lowly of heart? To have been always conversant in domestic intercourse with religious innovators, or men not yet with faith endued, would have been thought to argue in a Christian, not the tolerance of the blessed merciful, but the assent and duplicity of a selfish parasite: it would have been considered a flagrant violation of the express command of the Gospel ‡, founded upon the strictest justice, which interfered with the discharge of no social duty, but rather tended to preserve a sense of all social duties, and also upon the result of wise experience, and exact observation of life; "for what doth not custom invert?" as St. Bernard exclaims; "What doth not yield to use?" Hear the lamentations of the just man: "Quæ prius tangere nolebat anima mea, nunc præ angustia cibi mei sunt. First, it will seem insupportable: in process of time, you will judge it less grievous; soon after, you will feel it light; again, a little while, and you will not even feel it in any degree: finally, it will delight you. So, by degrees, you contract hardness of heart, and then aversion §." The importance of selecting persons of congenial views, with whom men were to associate, was re-

* Mœurs des Chrétiens. † Cont. Hæres. lib. iii. 3.
‡ Matt. xviii. 17. 1. ad Corinth. v. 11.
§ De Consideratione, i. 2.

cognized by the Gentiles. As the youth Lysiteles says in the old play, "The good seek for themselves faith, honour, glory, grace; cum probis potius quam cum improbis vivere vanidicis*."

The Catholic society of the ages of faith had indeed a more secure conscience, and a very different rule; but in yielding implicit obedience to the evangelic precept, which forbids a promiscuous association, without transgressing any counsel of mercy, it still acted upon the principle of self-defence, as its guides concur in admitting. "Believe me, my son," says the wise man, "do not remain, but fly; the least delay may be fatal to you†."—"Think not," continues St. Chrysostom, after quoting these words, "that I exhort you to fly because I fear the force of the arguments of the impious: no, I fear only your own weakness. As for us who are founded in the faith, all that they can say appears but so much vain sophistry, easier to destroy than the fragile work of the spider; but I repeat it, I fear your weakness‡." Truly it was well to fear when such examples had been given to the Church, of the fatal effects of neglecting that counsel, after she had seen herself robbed of a Tertullian, a priest, a man of severe understanding, of great learning, illustrious for his victories over Jews and Gentiles, over Apelles, Marcion, Praxea, and Hermogene, by the conversation of two fanatical dreaming women, Priscilla and Maximilla.

With respect to the middle ages it is an historical fact, that it was by means of artful insinuations, made in the ordinary intercourse of life, that the Manichæans and other heretics of the South of France perverted so many Christians. We can form some idea of their policy by means of the light which has been thrown upon the proceedings of secret societies in later times. "Simpliciori-bus singula non revelantur," says Reinerus of the Cathari. St. Bernard tells us, that the monster of his age wore the semblance of a just man, so kind and gracious was its outward cheer; the rest was serpent all. The heretics were truly in sheep's clothing; no men appeared more devout or more moral; nothing could sound better than their words at the commencement; for they imitated the policy of those spoken of in the Gospel, who at first produce good wine; but when men have drunk much, then

* Plaut. Trinum. i. 1. † Prov. i. 15. ‡ Hom. 11.

that which is worse. Pope Innocent III. says, that the Cathari promise with a context of heavenly words, and with the pictured adornment of eloquence, to prepare for their hearers a sound and wholesome couch, on which they may rest with a free heart from the tumult of vices; but that they rather construct a place of perdition, with the cords of sinners *. The danger of debate with such persons may be collected from the disputation published by Martene †. But even where there was no disguise from the beginning, or where the errors were merely such as later times have developed, the danger of associating with men leagued in such a confederacy, was not such as any wise man could despise. Where no disguise was offered, the common troops that waited on all who unfurled their banner against Rome, were only men profane, in whom nature was so transformed, that it seemed as if they had shared of Circe's feeding. Amidst brute swine they shaped first their obscure way; then, like those we read of with the poet, sloping onward, they found curs, snarlers, more in spite than power: still journeying down, they found dogs turning into wolves. Descending further through the curst and luckless foss, they met a race of foxes, so replete with craft, that they believed no skill could master it. These introduced them to the erring spirits of a later date; and against such as these, faithful reader, the Church did well to warn thee; nor should she cease, because her words are heard by other ears than thine. At all times men who from deliberate choice oppose Catholicism, are in one respect like the combatants described by Homer, *δεινῆς ἀκόρητοι ἀϋτῆς*; and of each a Catholic would naturally say, "He is too disputable for my company; this babble shall not henceforth trouble me." In colloquial intercourse with them, the end would always be idle recrimination, and the Catholic would have only to defend himself on Jason's ground:

Ἀμιλλαν γὰρ σὺ προὔθηκας λόγων ‡.

The Protestors, who are willing to accept that title, like the Greeks, subtle disputants, and Bonald remarks, that "in that they resemble all men of weak minds," would

* Innocent. Epist. X. 149.

† Disputat. inter Catholic. &c. Thesaur. tom. V.

‡ Medea, Eurip. 546.

have no difficulty in raising a cloud, through which the keenest eye might for a moment be unable to follow the movements of truth. Every Catholic has not so much Homeric wisdom as to remain unmoved when assailed by such adversaries, contented to reply to them, "I know you may contradict this, and speak plausibly against it."

Στρεπτὴ δὲ γλῶσσ' ἐστὶ βροτῶν, πολέες δ' ἔνι μῦθοι
Παντοῖοι· ἐπέων δὲ πολὺς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα *.

Prudence, a noble sense of courtesy, may enjoin silence; but, as Dante saith, "the power which wills, bears not supreme control: laughter and tears follow so closely on the passion which prompts them, that they wait not for the motions of the will in natures most sincere." The Catholic does but smile as one who winks; and thereupon assailants of this kind will rise tumultuous, and seek to cover him with sand, rushing on, like Scamander calling out to her sister Simois, and pressing forwards to overwhelm Achilles, saying, he thinks himself strong with the help of gods, and with his divine armour.

——— ——— κὰδ δέ μιν αὐτὸν
Εἰλύσω ψαμάθοισιν ἅλις, χέραδος περιχεύας
Μυρίον, οὐδέ οἱ ὀστέ' ἐπιστήσονται Ἀχαιοὶ
Ἀλλέξαι· τόσσην οἱ ἅσιν καθύπερθε καλύψω.
Αὐτοῦ οἱ καὶ σῆμα τετεύξεται, οὐδέ τί μιν χρεὼ
Ἔσται τυμβοχοΐης, ὅτε μιν θάπτωσιν Ἀχαιοί †.

What else but sand are all their affirmations, censures, suspicions, jests, scoffs, calumnies, and misrepresentations?

It is not in the camp of the Protestors, reader, that you will find men resembling St. Thomas of Aquinum, of whom we read, "no one could be found who had ever heard an idle word escape from his lips ‡." Observe, that we are not left to arrive at this conclusion merely by inference. We have the letters of the chiefs to consult, and there were not wanting to them friends more zealous than discreet, to transmit to us a knowledge of their table-talk. Without going back to the heretics of earlier times, we have only to consult the memoirs of Luther to be convinced that the ordinary conversation

* Il. xx. 248. † Il. xxi. 315. ‡ Bolland.

of that singular man was absolutely nothing but the most gross tissue of detraction and calumny. When he speaks, for instance, of the Archbishop of Mayence taking up a bible, not knowing what book it was, only remarking that it was against Catholics, or when he speaks of the monks in general, one can hardly explain how any company of persons, whatever might have been their zeal and excitement at the time, while not openly and audaciously libertine, could listen to such accounts without expressing their indignation. Had these men been persuaded by the Apostle to lay aside lying, and speak truth to their neighbour, their table-talk would have been less attractive, no doubt, to the curious, but also the great work, of which they were the instruments, would have been stopped at the commencement; for, as the universal doctor said, in the twelfth century, "It is the vice of lying which produces heresy, and makes schisms; which generates suspicions, propagates rumours, clothes what should be naked, and strips naked what should be veiled over *."

The very principles of these men, if such they can be called, had no more consistency or solidity than their table-talk; they can only be used as so much sand. When in the company of Catholics who have studied religion, who are familiar with the history of the Church, and with the writings of the great and illustrious philosophers who, in different ages, have explained and developed, and defended its doctrine and discipline, the professed followers of the modern systems of religion can seldom utter a sentence bordering upon the ground of religion, or of history in connection with it, without placing the former in a position where they could not do their duty, without seeming to them to offer discourteous rudeness: for, as St. Augustine says, "the dissent of the tongue is as necessary as that of the heart, in order to avoid incurring the evil of others. Duobus modis non te inquinat alienum malum, si non consentis, et si redarguis:" and where is there pardon for those who, though in truth's defence, change conversation into obstinate debate? These misguided men, looking through a distorted medium, cannot avoid every moment evincing ignorance or enmity; they speak unskilfully; or if their knowledge be more, it is much darkened in their malice.

* Alani de Insulis sum. de arte Prædicat. cap. xxvii.

Many of the mere terms of their ordinary conversation are enough to unfold the prodigious distance which separated them from the Christian philosophy; and, as Eckbert says, it is disgraceful that those of the faithful who have learning should be mute and without tongues in their presence *. Not if their countenances were masked with an hundred visors, could a thought of theirs, how cautiously expressed soever, fail to wound the exquisite sense, which faith must ever guard. In the thirteenth century we read of persons who could detect them merely by their tone of voice, and their gestures †. In general they cannot even avoid contradicting innumerable sentences of the Holy Scriptures, many also of their own principles laid down, and repeatedly republished in their formularies for daily and general use. With them a priest is generally a term of reproach, apostolic hearing of the Church a proof of slavery and superstition, meditation and retirement, and singing the praise of God in choirs, indolence. They retain some ancient forms, deprived of the spirit, which gave them life, and exclaim against them as the vestiges of Popery. Notwithstanding vague and abstract professions, they have proceeded virtually to place the highest good in material prosperity, in the sciences, in the mechanical arts, which minister to temporal comfort and convenience. They never view the course of time and the affairs of empires from the height of heavenly meditation, which despises the world, to follow Christ: a crucifix so far from being an epitome of their creed, is its refutation. Their maxims are drawn from the wisdom, or even the conventional caprice of the world; the virtues which they praise are all such as the Gentiles praised. The practical results of Christ's sermon on the beatitudes are either never spoken of, or else dismissed with contempt as so many Popish observances, or even perhaps as vestiges of Paganism, old oriental errors, utterly at variance with all sound enlightened views. Hence they are more conversant with Cicero than St. Augustin, with Horace than with the sacred poets of the Church. The author of the Imitation, if tried by their principles, has probably shown himself ignorant of every thing that a philosopher ought to know. By an involuntary impulse resulting from habit, they are every

* Eckbert, advers. Cath. † Alberic, ad an. 1236.

moment calling in question the very elements of the Christian faith, every moment supposing that their own mind, as well as that of the person with whom they converse, is a tabula rasa; as Evrard says of the Waldenses, "affirming nothing, but proposing every thing as a matter of doubt; saying, thus we think, thus we imagine; it seems so to us, perhaps it is so *:" or else they are dogmatizing, and laying down maxims contrary to faith, with an air of knowing more than they choose to express, as if being withheld from speaking more strongly only by courteous forbearance; as the Cathari are described by Pope Innocent III. "sub quadam humilitatis specie sui elationem animi palliantes †:" so that, as the Corinthians said of war, "ἥκιστα γὰρ πόλεμος ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς χωρεῖ ‡," in this combat of words, where men differ in faith, all conversation will be either a truce or a war, and no one can foresee how it will proceed; but events alone will determine it. Now for Catholics to have placed themselves in such a position, would have been both useless in regard to any effect which they might have desired to produce on others, and also full of danger and injury to themselves. Useless, for in general to attempt converting, in the course of ordinary conversation, souls deceived by diabolic fraud, is like attacking the hydra; as fast as one objection is refuted, another is sure to rise up against you. Here is a coil with protestation! If you defend the clergy of Guatimala to-day, you will have to meet some other charge equally fugitive to-morrow, resting upon similar ground, namely, the report of some miserable apostate, or mercenary scribe, who has regard for justice so far as it can tend to fill his purse. And it is not few words at random uttered that can set these greedy listeners to every slander free from error's thraldom, persuade them to lay aside what the Church terms "heretical depravity," and return to the unity of truth. How many of these listeners are in the number of those who search for reasons not to believe in the truth of the Catholic religion? Yes, but perhaps you will reply, I am still a debtor to them, and bound to offer myself as such. Grant this; but, on the other hand, has the spirit of the blessed merciful, descended upon you in more rich abundance than on St.

* Evrard, cont. Wald. c. 13. † Epist. IX. 135.
‡ Thucyd. lib. i. c. 122.

Bernard, who wrote in these terms to Guido the Legate: "It is related that Arnald of Brescia is with you at present. Probably you hope to convert him. Would that it might be so! Would that some one could from this stone raise up a child to Abraham! what a grateful present would mother Church receive from your hands! It is lawful to make the attempt; but a prudent man will be cautious not to transgress the number fixed by the Apostle, who says, 'Hæreticum hominem post unam et secundam correptionem devita *.'" Of what use to expose the evil of schism, when perhaps, like that of Gerard of Angouleme, it arises not from ignorance, but from secret ambition? To the calumnies of such men, St. Bernard deemed it a sufficient answer to allege the proverb, 'Occasio nunquam deerit ei qui vult recedere ab amico;' adding, 'This we say, not distrusting the justice of our cause, but being on our guard against his cunning; for though God hath produced his justice as the light, and his judgment as the noon-day, to those who will not open their eyes, his light is as the darkness †.'"

Only by a general change of their psychological condition, as philosophers would say, can any useful conviction be effected in such men; but it is not by agreeable conversation in the common intercourse of life, that such alterations take place; you must wait for sickness, adversity, the death of friends, a visit to a distant country: and full of danger and injury to the mind of Catholics would have been the rash exposing of themselves to such an atmosphere as encompassed men of this description, charged with every thing that can render truth difficult of apprehension, or difficult of being retained. To the influence of such men one may truly apply the strong poetic language of Æschylus, and say, that "the venom of their thoughts falling to the ground, will cause a horrible pestilence."

——— Ἰὸς ἐκ φρονημάτων
Πέδῳ πεσὼν ἄφερτος αἱανὴς νόσος ‡.

You ask, how could the heroic constancy of Catholics in ages of faith have been endangered by the subtle wiles of sophists? Well, they were noble; yet their honour-

* Epist. cxcvi. † Epist. cxxvi. ‡ Eumenid. 478.

able metal might be wrought from that it is disposed; therefore, concludes the wise poet,

> " 'Tis meet that noble minds keep ever with their likes;
> For who so firm that cannot be seduced?"

Lord Bacon remarks, that it is a property of the human intelligence to be more moved and excited by affirmatives than by negatives. Who can estimate the power that a resolute affirmation exercises over the mind of man? Now all persons wilfully separate from the household of faith are more or less distinguished by that disposition pervicacia asserendi, which Erasmus remarked in Luther. More than for any thing else they are remarkable for the faculty of affirming with an air of conviction, of affirming with a most intrepid indomitable contempt for what may be urged against them. In that lies their power, and they must have felt it even on themselves. Therefore, as a man is worth more for having been conversant with the wise and learned, so is he worth less for having heard the negations of men without faith. It may be very true that he is able to resist them at the moment, and disprove them; still, by the mere fact of having heard them, for all practical purposes of a Catholic life, it is highly probable that he has fallen in value; he has touched the pitch, and the laws of nature cannot be reversed to favour him. There remaineth a spot, and it will be owing to the grace of heaven if it should not descend to his very heart's core. A writer or speaker who opposes the supernatural life, steals from your intelligence by a process pretty nearly similar to that which an experienced thief adopts in extracting your money. He makes a bold push, and you imagine that you are only insulted, and have lost nothing; whereas, probably, the fact is, that he has succeeded, and perhaps even beyond his hopes; only in this case he has not, like the common thief, stolen trash, but that which is infinitely more valuable than even your fame—the treasure of your faith. You will not believe it possible, but he has, with a word, with a bold affirmation, robbed you of more than life; and, without enriching himself, has gone away, leaving you at some future time to make the discovery, and feel yourself poor indeed.

Rightly, therefore, did men of the middle ages teach, when they said, that joining in the conversation, or con-

sulting often the books of sophists, and men wilfully at variance with the Catholic church, though it be for the purpose of refuting them, is a perilous thing: in fact, in most instances, it is like conversing with the society of the profane, dissipated world, from which so few return without having lost some portion of charity and of hope. The venerable Bede says, "Soli ei conceditur hæreticorum libros legere qui a Deo solidatus est in fide Catholicâ, ut verborum dulcedine, vel astutiâ nequeat ab eâ segregari *:" and with double force may such an argument be used with respect to colloquial intercourse. St. Francis Xavier expresses the horror of his soul on meeting with Christians who did not believe in the truth of the adorable sacrament of the altar, from not frequenting it, or from the constant communication which they had with Gentiles, Mahometans, or heretics. Insensibly, almost necessarily, you imbibe the sentiments of those with whom you often converse.

Mark how you issue from the rueful wood! how changed is that spirit which hath listened to the syrens! You look back to peril with delight, and seem struck with sadness as soon as the sign of Catholics is made. Doth belief still linger in that bosom? then you forget, or disobey with voluntary weakness, the precept of the wise man, "Noli esse humilis in sapientiâ tuâ." Haughty, perhaps, and unbending in all the ceremonial of manners, you will be timid, yielding, and basely pusillanimous, in replying to the adversaries of truth. Those who have met you will need no one to tell them that they have seen the poet, the novelist, the senator, the universal speculator perhaps, but who shall convince them that they have seen the Catholic? Though you may not imitate the bard, who, long conformed to pagan rites, being a Christian secretly through fear, and who, for that lukewarmness, is said by Dante to have been doomed to pace four centuries and more round the fourth circle; —yet you have learned to breathe the atmosphere of scorn; the new instructors are of your train, and to them your reply is always, I concede.—"It might have been well; 'tis pity it hath been so: would that all were as you say: think not that I resemble such: I go not with them: I know not the man." And thus, at

* Comment. in Prophet. lib. i.

length, as Raimond says, in our heroic poesy, to those who seemed to shun the pagan's pride:—

> ——————— You let go your faith,
> And dare not once lift up your coward eyes
> 'Gainst him that you and Christ himself defies.

Ah, if ever a zeal for the house of God had eaten your souls, with what horror would you have contemplated the possibility of your lapsing into such a state as this! You affirm it was the desire of dispelling prejudice, and the hope of converting men to truth, which actuated you; but say, has the result of such intercourse been, that mind, conscious to itself of sincere faith and charity not feigned, which is weak with the weak, and inflamed with those that are offended; which, as St. Bernard says, fears nothing, neither after the example of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to be led captive into Egypt and Chaldea with transgressors, nor with holy Job to become a brother of dragons, and a companion of the ostrich, nor with Moses, what is far worse, to be blotted out of the book of God *? In the judgment of men, in ages of faith, though nothing but the disuse of ancient and holy Catholic practices, were to be the consequence of such promiscuous fellowship, there would have been sufficient reason for refraining from it. The two disciples recognized the Saviour of men in the breaking of bread. How so? "Because this man of God," says St. Ambrose, "according to his custom, and by a ceremony which was peculiar to him, blessed the bread before he ate it." "Now," adds Bourdaloue, "it is by this sign that he has always recognized, and that he still recognizes his true disciples." But this holy custom would have been almost abolished in the world, as that great orator complains, or it would have been despised as a thing frivolous, and without sense, if the constant intermixture of catholics, and of persons who inculcated the modern opinions, had been permitted.

The right of distinguishing between fundamental points, and what some might please to think matters of indifference, being once assumed by private men, they might, perhaps, in compliance with the customs of polite society, have continued to repair to the churches on

* De Officio Episcop. c. 4.

Sundays, but there was a reflection of Peter the Venerable, which would alone have been sufficient to deter men of generous natures from entering them, if the preceding days had been past, from choice in the company of persons who make a jest of the most holy mysteries of faith, and who are its sworn and professed enemies. His reflection was this, and as long as there was any chivalry in the soul, it decided the question, "Quo vultu, qua conscientia ad altare Salvatoris accedere, qua fronte ad colloquia piæ Matris ipsius venire tentabo, cum blasphemis hostibus ejus blanditus fuero * ?"

Let no rash inference, however, be drawn from these statements respecting the zeal and prudence of men in ages of faith. Nothing was to be done through pride or resentment, or the love of selfish ease. Nothing was intended against the practice of wide and generous charity; but men were only warned from seeking danger, and from mistaking in themselves ambition, the love of dissipation, and perhaps the secret encroachments of infidelity, for the love of their neighbour. Many are the examples related in ancient story, to preserve men from the sin of uncharitable severity towards persons separated from the Church. In the Speculum Morale, which passes under the name of Vincent of Beauvais, it is related, from the Lives of the Fathers, that a holy old man, living in the Desert of Egypt, opened his door one night, and let in a certain priest of the Manichæans, who was going to visit one of his sect, when he was benighted, and forced to ask a lodging. The old man knew who he was, but received him no less with cheerfulness, and made a bed for him. All that night long the Manichæan could to do nothing but reflect upon his great charity. Truly, said he, this must be a servant of God. The next morning he fell at his feet, gave himself up as his disciple, and remained with him ever afterwards †. In showing hospitality through compassion. men could never incur danger; and, without doubt, there were exceptions to all rules of discipline. The whole class of youth, for instance, was to be considered as placed without the category; and, in the ranks of the Protestors innumerable men appeared, who were never

* Pet. Ven. de Miracul. lib. ii. cap. 15.

† Speculum Morale, vol. iii. p. 10.

believed to be there from choice. Wherever there was generosity, candour, and innocence, Catholics might feel, in anticipation at least, at home.

The history of later times is not without illustrious examples to prove, that what seemed so great and admirable to the Roman philosopher, might be realized also, without injury to faith, in Catholics, and those who had been placed by birth in a situation apart, "quod quidem erat magnum, de summa re dissentientes, in eadem consuetudine amicitiæ permanere *."

Sir Humphrey Davy, in his Dialogues, maintains with strictness the consistency of his imaginary character, in making Ambrosio as a Catholic, reply to the student of Edinburgh, in these terms:—"You have mistaken me, if you think that I am shocked by your opinions; I have seen too much of the wanderings of human reason ever to be surprised by them, and the views you have adopted are not uncommon amongst young men of very superior talents, who have only slightly examined the evidence of revealed religion." Such an answer is in perfect accordance with the faith and profession of this speaker; but the illustrious author is guilty of an error, in his situation most pardonable, when he deems it necessary to state, that Ambrosio, to whose conversations, while in Italy, he ascribes his being made religious, whose cool judgment, and sound and humble faith, had induced him also to change his opinions respecting the origin of society, was "a Catholic of the most liberal school."

If he had said, a Catholic bred in the school of the Vatican, the qualification would have heightened the merit of his picture, for it is men who are strictly and fervently Catholic, and not those who mix up the notions of modern sophists with religion, that entertain the views which excited his admiration. It is the merciful and compassionate man whom the Church, in her vesper office, every Sunday, commemorates with praise, who orders his words with judgment, because he shall not be moved for ever. And such is the humble ascetic of the middle ages, who beseeches God to impart to him a divine sweetness, "that it may be a light to his intelligence, not alone to secure his reason from the deceits of heretic fraud, and to enable it to vindicate the truth of faith

* Phil. ii.

from the cunning wiles of adversaries, but also to correct in him a too indiscreet vehemence of conversation, knowing that God, the Supreme Wisdom, must be loved not alone fervently, but also wisely; for that otherwise the spirit of error might easily delude his zeal, if he neglected knowledge, since the cunning enemy has no machination more effectual to withdraw love from the heart, than that of inducing men to walk incautiously, and without reason *."

Proceeding now to show that the spirit and object of the ecclesiastical measures, directed against persons who had become obnoxious to censures, agreed with mercy, we shall find a great concurrence of evidence in historical sources; for amongst them I will not reckon the works of those artists, in modern times, who are delighted to transfer the countenances of the heathen persecutors, in the old paintings, to their portraits of monks and other ecclesiastics of the middle age, whom they represent holding a crucifix, with eyes half pressed without their sockets, and hands wrathfully clenched, in presence of victims who are to be immolated to their bigotry, forgetting or wishing to conceal the fact that these men, who were holy, notwithstanding whatever they may say, knew not the signs of ire, envy, and fanaticism; for heavenly minds from such distempers foul are ever clear.

These are the men who used to say with Bernardine, general of the Capuchins, "If God should call me to account in judgment for being too severe and inflexible, I should have nothing to answer for myself in defence; but if He should accuse me of being too clement and merciful, I should find an excuse instantly; for I could reply, that I had learned mercy from Him who had also exceeded measure in showing pity †."

Abuses occasionally were unavoidable in affairs relative to the ecclesiastical government, and accordingly Melchior Canus says, "I do not approve of all laws or censures; for some may have wanted prudence. It is pernicious to think that one ought to defend every thing whatsoever. "Non eget Petrus mendacio nostro; nostra adulatione non eget." But what I have undertaken to

* Idiota, contemp. cap. xi.
† Annales Capucinorum, an. 1537.

show is, that mercy was the rule, and its neglect, the exception.

"Whoever thinks," says St. Augustin, "that he understands the Divine Scriptures, or any part of them, but in such a sense as does not agree with the double charity of God and his neighbour, he doth not as yet understand them: but whoever comes to a conclusion favourable to this charity, though perhaps he does not speak the sense of the passage, he is not perniciously deceived. 'Si ea sententia fallitur, quæ ædificat charitatem, quæ finis præceptis est, ita fallitur, ac si quisquam errore deserens viam, eo tamen per agrum pergat quo etiam via illa perducit.' However, he is to be corrected, and to be shown the utility of not deserting the way, lest, by the custom of erring, he should be led astray *."

The Church applies the same rule to the explanation of her own judicial sentences, and therefore we read, in the collection of Ives de Chartres, that "all ecclesiastical decrees are to be interpreted in the sense which is most agreeable to charity †." This was certainly leaving far behind the maxim of the ancient poet:

"Leniter qui sæviunt, sapiunt magis ‡."

And it was as far from originating in the prudence which dictated that sentence, as the fruits of love must have exceeded the result of a policy, which only required a mitigation of rigour. What was the spirit in regard to censures of the men whom holy Church hath canonized? You may learn it from St. Bernard. Take, for example, his letter to Alard, in which he says, "You are too bitter against this man: I fear that your zeal is not according to knowledge. Was it not the part of humility not to do to another what you would not that another should do to you? Nay, it was required by your rule of perfection to imitate the Apostle, saying, 'I am made weak to the weak, that I may gain the weak.' And again, 'Do you, who are spiritual, instruct him in a spirit of lenity, considering yourself, lest you should be also tempted.' But the Prior, you say, expelled him, not I: true, but you persuaded, you in every way compelled him; and now, when the Prior has compassion, and desires to recall him,

* S. August. de Doct. Christ. lib. i. cap. 36.
† Ivonis Carnot. Decret. Prolog. ‡ Plautus, Bacch. iii. 3.

you continue obdurate. I ask you, what is this security, that, when all others have pity, you alone remain implacable? But you tell me, that I know not how justly he was expelled. I neither ask nor care whether justly or unjustly; but this alone is what I complain of, this alone is what surprises me, that after humbly satisfying and promising amendment, you will not suffer him to be received. If he were expelled justly, it is still pious to receive him back *." Perhaps you will say that this was merely a case of domestic discipline in one community.

Hear, then, how an English abbot of the middle ages speaks in general of persons separated from the Church: "There remain those who are without," says blessed Aëlred of Rievaulx, "Gentiles and Jews, hereticks and schismaticks, for whose ignorance we should grieve, for whose infirmity we should feel compassion, for whose malice we should weep, and to whom we should grant the assistance of our prayers with pious affection, that they also may be found with us in Christ Jesu our Lord †."

St. Theresa, and all the seraphic spirits of the Catholic Church, speak in the same strain: "God of my heart," she cries, "only true God, how great is the petition which I present to thee, when I pray thee to love those who do not love thee, to open to those who do not knock, to heal those who not only take a pleasure in being infirm, but who constantly labour to increase their infirmities? Thou sayest, O my God, that thou art come into the world to seek sinners: these, O Lord, are the true sinners. Regard not our blindness; regard only the rivers of blood which thy Son hath shed for our salvation. Make thy clemency shine amidst the darkness of our malice. Regard us, O Lord, as the work of thy hands, and save us by thy goodness and thy mercy ‡."

Such were the dispositions with which monks and nuns regarded, from their cloistered cells, the sinners who scorned and detested them. How well did they remember our Lord's reply to those that would have called down fire from heaven on the cities that refused to receive

* Epist. cccxiv.

† Aëlredi Rhievallens, Abb. Compendium Speculi Charitatis, cap. 12.

‡ St. Theresa's Exclamations, viii.

Him. "Filius hominis non venit animas perdere sed salvare *."

Many thought, with Origen of old, that those whom Christ sent to preach his Gospel, when rejected by any city, were to understand their Master's words, commanding them to shake off the dust from their feet, as teaching that they should so do in most benignant mercy, lest perchance that dust should be reserved as an evidence against them in the day of judgment of their unbelief †. The merciful Father of men, though He approves of the fervour of a devout mind, desires not that zeal should ever spoil the beauty of holy mercy ‡. He will cause the gourd to wither, that his prophet, who is made to weep for the loss of a plant, may learn not to demand the destruction of a city.

If we proceed to examine the conduct of the Church during the middle ages, towards unfaithful and corrupt members, we shall find that it was in conformity with these sentiments of love and mercy, majestic, yet most mild; calm, yet compassionate. "The Church," says St. Augustin, "seeking the salvation of all with maternal charity, feels herself placed, as it were, between the frantic and the lethargic. The frantic are unwilling to be restrained, and the lethargic are unwilling to be excited; but she perseveres, with the diligence of charity, to chastise the frantic, to stimulate the lethargic, and to love both: phreneticum castigare, lethargicum stimulare, ambos amare §."

Mabillon is filled with astonishment at the patience and forbearance of the sovereign Pontiffs, and the bishops of the whole Church, in suffering Berenger, during the space of thirty years, to continue publishing such errors, lapsing again after repeated recantations, and openly insulting them while violating the most sublime mysteries of faith ||. Even the writers most opposed to the ecclesiastical authority are struck with this fact. Schoell acknowledges that Berenger, against whom the whole of the west had raised one cry, and whom four or five councils had condemned, escaped from all punishment, owing to

* Luc. ix. 56.
† Cresolii Anth. Sac. Origen. Hom. 4. in Gen.
‡ Cresolii Anth. Sac 570. § Epist. 159.
|| Præfat. in VI. Sæcul. Bened. §. 3.

the tolerance of Gregory VII. who reprobated his doctrine, without permitting his person to be persecuted *.

The king of Aragon petitioned the Council of Lavaur that Gaston de Bearn, Count of Poix, might be re-established in his rights; and what was the answer of the Prelates? "To mention," said they, "but a few of the innumerable charges against him; he is bound with the confederates leagued against the Church; he is the open and grievous persecutor of the churches and of the clergy; he takes arms to assist the Count of Toulouse; he had with him the murderer of the Legate, Peter de Castelnuovo, of holy memory; he maintains the roturiers; he led them last year into the cathedral church of Oloron, where he cut down the pyx, and, horrible to utter, scattered the Lord's body on the ground, while one of these men, in derision, clothed himself in pontifical habits, intending to represent a pontiff singing mass; contrary to his oath, he has laid violent hands on clerks: for these and many other acts, sentences of excommunication and anathema have been pronounced against him: nevertheless, if he will satisfy the Church as he ought, and gain the benefit of absolution, afterwards he shall be heard de jure suo †."

Every society has the right of expelling from its pale such members as outrage its fundamental rules; but the measures of the Church, in the exercise of this unquestionable right, were conceived with intentions not alone of self-defence, but of mercy towards the very persons whom she ejected. "Lest we should neglect our pastoral office, by not driving away the wolves from the flock, we deem it right," says Innocent III. to the clergy and people of Viterbo, "to pass more severe decrees against the defenders, promoters, and followers of heretics, in order that they who cannot be recalled to the way of justice by themselves, may be confounded in their defenders, and when they see themselves shunned by all, may desire to be reconciled to unity ‡."

No personal or human indignation can be traced in the great judicial sentences by which Rome sought to protect the interests of men and nations from the power of tyrants. As Pope Innocent III. said to the king of Por-

* Schoell, Cours d'Hist. des Etats Europ. liv. v. c. 12.
† Hist. Albig. cap. 66. ‡ Epist. Inn. III. lib. i. 1.

tugal, when the latter presumed to affirm that the Pontiff had lent a credulous ear to reports, and had spoken disrespectfully against him before all, "such conduct would be a reproach to our prudence, because the holy successors of Peter have been accustomed not to revile, but, after the example of Christ, with patience to endure being reviled *."

The decree of the Council of Constance, commanding that the bones of Wickliff should be dug up, and removed out of consecrated ground, in testimony of his being an excommunicated person, can never be understood as arguing a want of mercy in these fathers, when we consider what they owed to the living; and if we bear in mind the prodigious errors, and their pernicious effects, which that act was intended to denounce. Melancthon himself acknowledges, that Wickliff "was the cause of much tumult and trouble in England †."

Those to whom Lambeth is the Vatican, point at what they call the Lollards' tower, at that palace, with as much interest as if they guided us to the prison of the holy apostles in the Roman forum. Yet one of their most distinguished writers ‡, who is always hostile to the Catholic Church, and favourable to its opponents of every nation and period, admits that the Lollards were highly dangerous, that the greater number of them were eager for havoc, and held opinions incompatible with the peace of society, that the public safety required such opinions to be repressed, founded, as they were, in gross error, and tending to direct and enormous evil. This statement is repeated by another writer, on the same side, who even observes, "how little it is to the credit of Richard II. that he suffered the principles of these men to be propagated without interruption; and that had Wycliffe been stopped at the commencement of his misguided career, well would it have been for the security, no less than the honour, of the country §."

"Certainly it was a thing worthy of great commendation to all posterity," says a wise and humane magistrate of France, alluding to this act of the Council of Constance, "that when the Popedom was infinitely afflicted by the

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xiv. 8.
† Comment. in Arist. Polit. ‡ Southey.
§ Europe in the Middle Ages, vol. iv. 298. Lardner's Cyclop.

schism, the universal church should have taken in hand the cause of the Pope, and sustained it virtuously against heresy and error *." It was necessary, for the preservation of the people, that the Church, by a solemn act, should proclaim her horror of such doctrines, and execute a tardy justice in pronouncing their author an outcast from her communion. Men like John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Henry Percy, Marshal of England, who had borne Wickliff company to St. Paul's, when he was summoned to appear there before the Bishop of London, on purpose to discountenance that prelate in the exercise of his undoubted authority, and to animate Wickliff and his followers in their courses, were not the representatives of mercy, but mere reckless and selfish politicians, the forerunners of those refined hypocrites, who, in subsequent times, ranged themselves under the banners of freedom. The Church was not actuated by intolerance in requiring the fulfilment of conditions in proof of sincerity before she restored to her bosom men who had outraged faith. Milton's Satan knew the justice and wisdom of her measures on such occasions, and might give a useful lesson to those conceding counsellors, who would abolish discipline, in order to invite Protestors back.

> But say I could repent, and could obtain
> By act of grace my former state; how soon
> Would height recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
> What feigned submission swore †?

But where a reasonable ground of confidence was seen, the knot was disengaged with eagerness; for they who held the keys from Peter were of him instructed, "that they should err rather in opening than in keeping fast; so but the suppliant at their feet implore ‡." Indeed, that the spirit of the Church ought to be all mercy and forbearance, was every year proclaimed, at the commencement of her great penitential season of Lent, when, in her address to the Almighty in the introit on Ash Wednesday, she says, "Misereris omnium, Domine, et nihil odisti eorum quæ fecisti." Let us, however, turn to the facts, and mark the conduct of her guides. Wit-

* Pasquier, Recherches de la France, liv. iii. 26.
† iv. 93. ‡ Dante, Purg. IX.

ness, then, St. Ambrose selling the sacred vessels to ransom some Illyrian slaves, most of whom are Arians, St. Martin of Tours using every effort to save the heretics, whom Maximus wished to sacrifice to sanguinary zeal, going to Treves to intercede with the emperor in favour of the Priscillianists, and considering as excommunicated Itacius and the other bishops who had excited him to rage against them, St. Augustin supplicating the proconsul of Africa in behalf of the Donatists, saying, "Non tibi vile sit neque contemptibile, fili honorabiliter dilectissime, quod vos rogamus ne occidantur, pro quibus Dominum rogamus ut corrigantur *," and Lactantius writing in the same strain, "Defendenda enim est religio non occidendo, sed moriendo; non sævitia, sed patientia; non scelere, sed fide †." Open the celebrated work of St. Gregory on the pastoral care, and you will find that mercy and moderation are enforced in almost every page. Observe, again, the qualities which St. Bernard requires in those whom he recommends Pope Eugene to select. "They must be men," he says, "who are not of a hardened front, but modest and timid; who fear nothing but God, and hope nothing but from God; who stand manfully for the afflicted, and judge in equity for the meek of the earth; who are discreet in commanding, sober in zeal, and not remiss in mercy; who do not despise, but who teach, the vulgar; who do not load with burthens, but who cherish, the poor; who do not fear, but who despise, the threats of princes ‡."

Victorius the bishop writes to St. Avitus, to know whether the oratories or basilicas of the heretics might be taken possession of by the Catholics, and converted to the use of the true religion. St. Avitus regards it as a difficult question, because, if a Catholic king were to be prevailed on by Catholic bishops to transfer those basilicas of the heretics to the Catholics, the heretics would not unjustly complain that they were persecuted, et Catholicam mansuetudinem calumnias hereticorum atque gentilium plus deceat sustinere quam facere; for it would be hard if those who perish by an open perversity should be able to flatter themselves on their confession or their martyrdom. "You will say, perhaps," he con-

* Epist. C. † Divin. Instit. lib. v.
‡ De Consideratione, liv. iv. c. 4.

tinues, "that the heretics, if they had the power, would attack our altars. It is true, nor do I deny it. These invaders, who seize the churches of others, rage whenever they can with foul talons; but to offer violence, to take forcible possession of places, to transfer altars, are acts that belong not to the dove. More especially, therefore, should be dreaded that which the heretic thinks himself permitted to do. I wish not that the places of worship of the heretics should be seized; I desire rather that they may be abandoned, like the tents of herdsmen. Semper optandum est, non ut mutata transeant, sed infrequentata torpescant. What we should wish is, that an eternal desolation may be their fate, by means of the correction of the people, and that we may never receive what ought only to be rejected by themselves as a consequence of their conversion *." The thirty-third canon of the council of Epauna forbade the basilicas of heretics to be used for holy purposes; but the first council of Orleans desires that, after a conquest, the churches of the Goths should be received.

"Whoever is truly animated with the spirit of the Church," says a recent author, "far from being fanatical, will always have the spirit of gentleness, will be the enemy of violence, the promoter of peace †." When Hincmar presented his four memorials to the council of Soissons respecting the grounds of his proceedings against Vulfade and other clerks who were ordained by Ebon, the last, which was written personally against Vulfade, indicating great passion, the fathers refused to listen to the reading of the whole piece ‡. When the same Hincmar deemed it necessary to act with severity against the person of Gottschalk, his conduct called forth the indignant murmurs of the most distinguished ecclesiastics of France. Lupus, abbot of Ferrers, Prudentius Tricassinus, the Church of Lyons, and the councils of Valence and of Langres, condemned such measures "against a poor monk §." Yet I would not venture to pronounce the archbishop or his illustrious contemporary Raban Maur intolerant.

* S. Aviti Epist. de Basilicis Hæreticorum.
† Scotti Teorema di Polit. Crist. 144.
‡ Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. i. 122.
§ Gallia Christiana, 488.

I confess the first almost disarms me by the humility of his death; for even the epitaph which he wrote for himself, and which was on his tomb in the abbey of St. Remy, beginning with, "Nomine non merito Præsul Hincmarus," ought, I think, to induce one to set out in search of some other source of harshness, less impure than the guilt which that word implies; and with respect to the latter, a recent historian, who says that his fifty-one treatises display equal ability and intolerance, has only proved by that sentence that he had made himself better acquainted with their number than their contents. Occasionally, indeed, this great man may have failed in respect to the grace of moderation; but who so constant as never to be moved? St. Augustin was scandalized at the manner in which St. Jerome treated Rufinus, and he wrote to tell him so. "I have read the letter, which you have written against Rufinus; and I confess, my dear brother, it was with grief I read it, to see two persons, once so united, now so animated against each other. Although it is clear what pains you take not to render injury for injury, nevertheless I could not avoid, while reading it, feeling my heart penetrated with sorrow and fear. Woe, woe to the world, because of scandals! Who can be safe after seeing you, at your age, engaged in such divisions, and while following the Lord in that pleasant land where he said to his disciples, 'My peace I give to you, my peace I leave to you.' If I could find you together in one place, I would cast myself at your feet, in the transport of my grief, and I would conjure you both with tears, by what you owe to yourselves, by what you owe to one another, and by what you owe to all the faithful, and particularly to the weak, for whom Christ died, to whom you give on the theatre of this life a spectacle so terrible and so pernicious,—I would conjure you, I say, not to publish writings in which there appears so much emotion against one another—writings which you cannot recall, and which, therefore, may be a source of renewed hostility many years hence *." What charity and tolerance in the rule given by St. Gregory Nazianzen †, in which he condemns those who, in disputing against the heretics, load them with opprobrious words, as if their argument could be strengthened by

* Epist. ad Hieron. 73. † Serm. 26 and 32.

such folly. "The minds of the adversaries," he says, "should be exasperated by no acrimonious language, but the greatest indulgence should be shown to them, lest they should become more impudent."

St. Dionysius of Alexandria found the advantage of the mildness recommended by St. Gregory Nazianzen, when he went to correct some priests who had fallen into the heresy of the Millenarians. He convened them for the sake of a mutual conference and explanation, and for three whole days, from morning till evening, endeavoured to show them their error. "Great," he says, "was their love of truth, and their care lest they might wish to adhere to preconceived opinions after they had been proved false. They argued fairly; and when refuted, they retracted with simplicity. Finally, their chief, in the name of all the others, declared that they would never again make mention of that question, nor interrupt the concord of the brethren. Thus the conference ended, to the joy of all men." Mabillon cites this example, in his treatise on monastic studies *; and all great Catholic writers, when occasion has offered, have inculcated the same lesson. "No one," says Pelisson, "has ever persuaded another by addressing him in insulting language. It is not the nature of the human mind to give up its arms immediately to the human mind. It must think, meditate, and deliberate with itself, and be convinced in secret, before being convinced in public †."

All those great champions of orthodoxy who are the most accused of having pursued erring men with severity, were precisely the most liberal and benign in their interpretation of what was suspected or guilty. St. Athanasius excused Origen his various errors, saying that he had proposed his opinions only as hypothetical, and as matter for question ‡. "How important is it," exclaims a German philosopher, after remarking the conduct of Athanasius, "to hear this judgment of so great a bishop, so stedfast in the faith! How differently, at present, do men judge who have little or nothing in common with Athanasius §!"

* De Studiis Monast. pars ii. cap. xvi.
† Pelisson, Reflexions sur les Differends de la Religion, I.
‡ Epist. ad Serap. IV.
§ Staudenmaier's Joan. Scot. Erigena, i. 267.

Heliand, the celebrated monk, of whose chronicle many fragments have been preserved by Vincent de Beauvais, who remarks, that in his time, the leaves of the work had been dispersed, and in part lost, has merely said of John Scot Erigena, that he composed a book De Divisione Naturæ, very useful, if he should be pardoned for some things, in which he deviated from the line of the Latins, while fixing his eyes stedfastly on the Greeks*. Henry of Ghent, in his great work on theology, quotes many passages from his writings†. It is not that pious and learned Catholics, in using or defending the works of men condemned by the Church, attempted to invalidate her sentence, but that they either showed that the reproved book should be ascribed to a different author, or that the text was maliciously corrupted, or that the author erred more in words than in mind; so that they stand upon a question of mere fact, on which the Church gives no judgment. Thus did St. Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil, Picus of Mirandula, Merlinus, Sixtus of Sienna, Halloix, and Huet, defend Origen. Thus did also Sirmondus and Petavius vindicate, from the charge of heresy, the writings of Theodoret and Iba; and thus, also, did Gregorius de Laura write an apology for the abbot Joachim, to whom were ascribed certain books that were condemned by the fourth Lateran council. It seems to be a propensity of many learned men, in modern times, to seek the honour of peculiar penetration and solidity, by detecting heretical expressions in the works of others. Their wits appear like Dogberry's, who, in noting down the prisoner's reply that they serve God, would command the clerk to write God first, lest God should come after the name of such villains. Nothing of this captious trifling can be detected in the polemical works of the middle age. The saying of St. Augustin was then a rule with theologians:—"Non enim quia durum aliquid, ideo rectum; aut quia stupidum est, ideo sanum‡." Therefore, their works seem to many, at present, to be poetical and imprudent.

The spirit in which theological controversies were often then conducted, may be witnessed in the letters which

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Hist. lib. xxix. c. 108.

† Henricus Gaudevens. Somm. vol. ii. art. lxxiv. q. ii. f. 283.

‡ De Civitat. Dei, lib. xiv. cap. 9.

passed between Petrus Cellensis, abbot of St. Remi, and Nicolaus, a monk of St. Albans, in England, relative to the doctrine of the conception.—"We both seek," says the former, who defended the pious belief of Christians on that head, "devotion of heart, not verbosity of mouth, secret admiration, not public discussion. We both run to follow her, and I wish it may be towards her. One intention unites our souls, though our language may be different. Are we wiser, or more learned than Augustin or Jerome, who, though unanimous in faith, accordant in religion, fervent in charity, sublime in the science of the Scriptures, and similar in authority, yet are found greatly differing in some opinions? Behold the cedars of Libanus; these lofty palms bent hither and thither in these things, and yet never moved in the root of charity, each abounding in his sense, and both united in the articles of faith. Is it strange, then, that our light stubble should be borne thus by opposite winds? If I should communicate all my superfluous words, I should plant a grove near the altar. I am even more strict in my expressions of reverence than you who dispute this pious belief, precipitating words while I dispose mine with judgment. You praise the blessed Virgin, and I also; you proclaim her holy, and I also; you exalt her above the choir of angels, and I also; you say that she was free from all sin, and I also. In this offering of veneration I go with you, and think with you; but if you wish to fabricate any new form of language, contrary to that which is approved of by the see of Peter, whose office it is to approve or to condemn the order of the universal Church, then I stand firm, and pass not the forbidden bounds. As for this question, you did well to concede to me that many things are presumed of the blessed Virgin which are nowhere read; and that we are to stand to such presumptions until the contrary can be proved. If any words of my letter have wounded you, forgive me, and depend upon receiving the same indulgence from me. Pray for me, my dearest friend, and I wish that I may behold you face to face *." The prayer of St. Augustin was also that of St. Thomas, before taking up a pen to write against any adversary: "O Domine, mitte mitigationes in cor, ut pugnando charitate veritatis, non

* Petri Cellens. lib. ix. epist. 10.

amittam veritatem charitatis." Never did an angry word escape from his lips, say those who had assisted at his scholastic acts; always was he faithful to the warning of the Holy Ghost, "Fili in mansuetudine serva animam tuam."

As for continual oral disputations with persons who had separated themselves from the communion of the faithful, the Catholic Church had no such custom. She terminated her disputes with adversaries of this kind, by inviting them to practise that little lesson of love, in which consisted all her grace, and all her knowledge. If any man or party sought to be contentious, or to challenge her to arguments, she repeated the sentence of the apostle; and whenever any of her ministers were induced to concede to the challenge of her disobedient children, and to meet them in the strife of words, the holy and the wise were not slow to raise the voice of complaint and regret. "In this danger of the republic," says a religious magistrate of France, writing, at the time, of the great troubles of religion, "it seems to me, that we should have recourse to God by humble prayers, processions, and public rogations, that He may be pleased to turn aside His anger from us. I wish, as a good Christian and a good citizen, that we had one faith and one law; not that I would call a new council, for I see no good derived from councils in which a deliberative voice is given to those who are separated from the common and ancient faith. We have had sufficient proof, in our time, in the city of Poissy, when we conferred before King Charles IX. with the Calvinist ministers against the advice of the wise Cardinal de Tournon, who foresaw the inconveniences. Open the door to disputes, and there is no article of faith which a disingenuous spirit cannot call in question. Look back to antiquity, and you will find that, in all times, the union of the universal Church depended upon the chair of St. Peter, and of his successors, in the city of Rome. The heretics sometimes have found more hardy combatants for themselves than the Catholics. Some ancients attest, that the books of the Arians were more learned and better constructed than ours. Nevertheless, their doctrine being false and full of lies, died of itself, without any artifice of men. The same thing happened to the Pelagians, Novatians, Donatists, and others of the like stamp; and I make no doubt that such will be the end of Calvinism, provided we bring

some zeal and devotion on our part, which will be effected, not by contentions and conferences with heretics, nor by murders and wars, which produce atheism, but by discipline, and virtue, and honour *. No narrow prejudices prevented Catholic philosophers from enjoying what was great and admirable in the works of the Gentiles, or of persons obnoxious, in other respects, to the censures of the Church. St. Jerome was delighted with the genius of Origen; and St. Augustin, in an eloquent passage of his work on the city of God, after enumerating the various branches of art and science, the cultivation of which displays the noble nature of the human mind, adds, "In ipsis postremo erroribus et falsitatibus defendendis, quam magna claruerint ingenia philosophorum atque hæreticorum, quis æstimare sufficiat †?" It is certain, that the Church herself invariably judged of men as of books, "in globo." When the general tenor was good, she did not subtilize on detached parts.

How little do the moderns seem aware that in the monasteries of the middle age the liberal and truly tolerant spirit of the great men of Christian antiquity was always found. It was the monks, as Bede can testify, who had taught a British king that the religion of men must be voluntary, and that no compulsory measures were pleasing to God. It was the monks who evinced mercy and benignity to the Pagans of the north, whenever a zeal more warlike than holy began to dictate acts of cruelty against them. Remark the following expressions, in a monastic chronicle, concerning the Pagans of Prussia:—"Multa poterant dici de hoc populo laudabilia in moribus, si haberent solam fidem Christi ‡." So far were these men from imitating the sullen silence of the Roman historians, who have allowed nothing to come down to us respecting the virtue of the nations whom they conquered!

It was frequently owing to ecclesiastical influence that the works even of art belonging to Pagans and Sarassins were spared by the civil power, which would have doomed them to destruction; as when King James I. of

* Pasquier, Lettres, liv. x. 6.
† De Civ. Dei, lib. xxii. c. 24.
‡ Helmold, Chron. Slavor. lib. i. c. 1.

Aragon, on the capture of Valencia, would have destroyed the great mosque, in order that a church might be built on the spot, if the bishop, finding it ample, and wondrously adorned with emblems and variegated work, had not persuaded him to spare it, that it might be purified and converted into a Christian temple *.

It is a fact important to remark, that rulers of the Church were frequently urged on by the public opinion to condemn offenders against faith, and that they expressed the greatest reluctance to put in force even the mild and wholly spiritual sentence of the ecclesiastical authority. Ives de Chartres writes to Roscelin, saying, that he hears that since the council of Soissons he still continues, by clandestine disputations, to defend his former opinion, which he had abjured. He implores him to beware how he rends the vest of God, armed with human reasoning and an unhappy eloquence. "Nevertheless," he continues, "not on account of myself should I fear or dislike your presence, hoping better things of you, and things nearer to salvation; but some of our citizens, curious in investigating the lives of others, though indolent to correct their own, hold you to be hateful, and me to be suspected on account of you; and when they hear your name and former conversation, they suddenly, after their manner, run to gather up stones. Therefore I advise you, assuming the patience of blessed Job, to say with him, 'Sustinebo iram Dei, quoniam merui, donec justificet causam meam;' for I testify that if you, being converted, should wish to fly from the vanity of your carnal sense, the breasts of divine consolation will not be wanting to you; and Mother Church, which showed paternal severity to the devious, will receive back the corrected with maternal piety. It remains, therefore, that you write a palinode, and that you repair publicly the vest of your Lord, which you have rent publicly—that you may be loved and restored by us, and embraced with benefits †."

In France, when the last heresies commenced in the sixteenth century, it was a general complaint that the bishops did not evince sufficient activity and energy in

* Bernardini Gomesii de Vit. Jacobi I. lib. xiv.

† Ivonis Carnot. Epist. VII.

punishing those who were infected with it. Therefore recourse was had to commissions of extraordinary judges under authority of the parliament *.

It is curious to find the royal edict, in 1512, which restrained the power of the clergy of Rouen in the exercise of the privilege of St. Romain, stating that the said privilege shall not extend in future to the deliverance of criminals detained for crimes of heresy or high treason †, the publication of which edict was considered as a triumph of the civil authorities over the clergy of Rouen. In 1540, the attorney-general and the parliament declared that they would permit no prisoners accused of such crimes to be delivered, and threatened the clergy with a seizure of their possessions if they refused to accede to such modifications.

The epistle of Pope Innocent III. to the Archbishop of Narbonne and his suffragans expresses the spirit which animated the Church in all ages, with respect to the manner of correcting and receiving back those who had chosen a way unto themselves. "In order," says the pontiff, "to lead back souls deceived in many and various modes by diabolic fraud, to Him who is the way, and the truth, and the life, we must bear with many things for a time, imitating what the apostle Paul styles his craft—meaning the prudence which dissembleth many things, after the example of him who feigned an intention to go farther, when he showed himself as a traveller to the two disciples. If any one should not instantly and wholly abandon his ancient customs, but should retain to himself some of them, either to spare shame, or perhaps through a desire, as it were, to bury with honour his ancient law, such a person is not to be altogether opposed and confuted, provided he doth not err in the substance of truth; for diversity of customs, especially in external habit, doth not deform the holy Church. Nevertheless, we do not say this to approve of such emulation, but that we may follow the example of Him who was made weak to the weak, yea, all things to all men, that he might gain all men to Him who wisheth all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of his truth. For, dearly beloved, is a physician to be blamed

* Fleury, Instit. au Droit Ecclesiast. tom. ii. c. 9.

† Floquet, Hist. du Privilège de St. Rom. i. 213.

who sometimes indulgeth his patient in a thing less wholesome, through compliance with his great desire? Certainly not; since, although it be a little injurious in one respect, it may be very beneficial in another. Do you therefore, brethren, support such persons in a spirit of lenity, not repulsing, but attracting them; because the generality of men are more easily brought back by admonitions than by comminations; and some are more corrected by affability of grace than by asperity of discipline; for oil must first be poured in, and, if it be required, wine also over it; and with converts of this kind, after the wine, oil again must be poured in." And then he adds this remarkable sentence:—"Nevertheless, while intending to recall the erring from heretical depravity, we wish that the faithful may be cherished in Catholic truth; since it is more tolerable that the perverse should perish in their perversity, than that the just should decline from his justice *."

Hurter remarks, that the epistles of this pontiff evince a deep knowledge of the human heart, and prove that he had caught the spirit of the gospel quite as well as the modern judges, who condemn him. Highly worthy of remark, in our times, are the letters which he addressed to the archbishops and their suffragans of the churches of Narbonne and Genoa, exhorting them earnestly, and commanding them by apostolic rescript, not to permit his beloved sons, Durandus de Osca and Guillelmus of St. Antonio, with their associates that have been reconciled to ecclesiastical unity, after renouncing the heresy of the Waldenses, to be molested in any manner by any one, under pretence of their former error, but to cherish them benignly, as if young plants; since the art of those to whom the government of souls is confided ought to be such, that not only they may recall, by pastoral solicitude, those who have been led astray from the Lord's flock, but also cherish in the spirit of gentleness those who have been brought back to it; that while such persons may rejoice in experiencing the expected sweetness, others may be induced by their example to desert the error of their blindness †. To the archbishop and his suffragans of the Church of Tarragona he writes to the

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. xii. 67.

† Epist. Inn. III. lib. xiii. 63; lib. xv. 94.

same effect, charging them to assist these men mercifully on account of God, and to suffer no formalities to cause an impediment in the way of others who seek to return, lest those who seem to be drawn by divine grace should be repelled by their hardness from the infinite mercy of God *. He writes also to the Bishop of Marseilles, charging him to receive these convertites with benignity, and not to suffer them, on account of the note which they had contracted from their former conversation, to be rashly molested by any one, but to preserve them safe from all infamy and scandal, and to assist them mercifully with testimonials and in every other manner, for the sake of God †.

"If the blind, and the lame, and the weak, are to be not only invited to the marriage feast, but compelled to assist at it, much more are they not to be repelled from it who hasten to it of their own accord: therefore he charges the bishop of Cremona not to suffer any one henceforth to calumniate Bernard and his companions, who had incurred the infamy of heresy, but who had humbly and devoutly repaired to the holy Roman Church to be restored to its communion; and by apostolic rescript he commands him to receive them as faithful men and true Catholics, walking with consent in the house of the Lord ‡."

The instances of merciless persecution and of undue severity which are to be found in the ecclesiastical annals, can all be traced to men who were, either unintentionally or with a full sense of their own position, at variance with the desire of the Church. A modern French writer, so little distinguished for partiality to the side of religion, that he seems always anxious to represent in odious colours the rulers of the Church, is obliged to admit, in speaking of the war against the Albigenses, that Pope Innocent III. lamented and wept for the blood which was shed, and even issued bulls of anathema against the perpetrators of cruelty; but the fact is, he says, that the people of Provence detested the French, and wished to establish themselves as a distinct nation: the heresy was but an accident, and the mere pretence for a war of ambition, of which the first and

* Id. Epist. lib. xiii. 78. † Id. lib. xv. 50.
‡ Id. lib. xv. 146.

unavoidable cause was the action of the north upon the south, of the central power of France upon the little sovereignty of Toulouse, that desired to be independent *. This is his opinion; but Hurter, armed with far different erudition, though not a Catholic, has nobly vindicated Innocent from the calumnies of the moderns, as repeated by Sismondi †.

How admirable does this great pontiff appear, when he offers an asylum at the foot of his throne to the old Raymond of Toulouse, the ancient and inveterate enemy of Catholicism, and to his son—when he himself pleads their cause against the victorious crusaders, and, when after giving the most excellent advice to this young prince, and, in vain endeavouring to appease his conquerors, he assigns to him the comtat and Provence, in order that the innocent son of the guilty might not be left without patrimony! The children of the enemies of the Church experienced the benefit of his intervention. James of Aragon, whose father had been slain in fighting for the heretics, being made prisoner by the Catholic army, was liberated by order of Innocent.

Schœll is a writer whom no one can suspect of being inclined to favour the side of the Church; and yet, when speaking of these wars, he says, "One cannot absolve the Manichæans of France nor the Cathari from the reproach of an abominable fanaticism: they professed errors grievous and dangerous, which no government could tolerate ‡." The latter explanation is more conformable to the fact. Their errors, as Pope Innocent said, were the more horrible, as not only attacking evangelic truth, but also the philosophic doctrine respecting the Creator of the universe §. We have the writings of Pierre de Vaux Sernai, a monk of Citeaux, and of William of Pui-Laurent, chaplain to Raymond VII. count of Toulouse, who, as ocular witnesses, describe the execrable impieties and manners of the Albigenses, who literally fulfilled St. Paul's prediction, of men holding the doctrines of demons, speaking falsehood in hypocrisy. They comprised all known heresies, and having no chief

* Villemain, Tableau de la Lit. au Moyen Age.
† Hurter, Geschichte Innocente III.
‡ Schœll, Cours d'Hist. des Etats Europ. liv. v. c. 12.
§ Epist. Inn. liv. x. 54.

from whom they could be traced, St. Bernard calls them a headless body. Armenia was for some time their central country, whence they began, at the end of the ninth century, to pervert the Bulgarians, then but recently converted to the faith. In the eleventh century, they passed into France, and King Henry I. committed many of them to the flames at Orleans. The horrors which they introduced into domestic life (for one of their tenets was to forbid marriage) may be learned from the letter which Raymond V., Count of Toulouse, wrote in 1177 to the general chapter of Citeaux; and indeed, if other evidence were wanting to prove what was the nature of their opinions, the celebrated exclamation of St. Thomas, alluding to them, while dining at the table of St. Louis — "Conclusum est contra Manichæos" — would be enough to banish doubt from every mind that could justly appreciate the value of incidental testimony.

An anecdote related by an ancient author will serve to illustrate both the real character of these pretended martyrs, and the disposition of the clergy to treat them with greater mildness than the public opinion at the time deemed just. Guibert de Nogent relates that John, Count of Soissons, a man of horrible manners, and a close ally of Jews and heretics, used to utter nefarious words against the holy Saviour. "His blasphemies might be learned," continues the good abbot, "from the little book which I wrote against him at the entreaty of Bernard the dean; but as they were unutterable by a Christian mouth, and execrable to pious ears, we suppressed them. Yet at Christmas and during the Lord's passion, he shewed himself so humble, that you would scarcely think him perfidious. On the paschal night, he came to vigils in the church, and suggested to a certain religious clerk that he should say something to him on the mystery of those days. When he had spoken how the Lord suffered and rose again, the count replied, whistling with scorn, 'All fables—all so much wind!' 'If,' said the clerk, 'you count them to be fables, why do you watch here?' 'Oh,' said he, 'I am only waiting to see certain persons that come here.' For though he had a most beautiful young wife, he abandoned himself to shameful courses, and not even nuns were safe from his violence. At length, returning from the royal expedition, he was struck by the hand of death amidst his

amours; and when he became alarmed, he inquired from a certain clerk what he thought of his disease; who proceeded to remind him of his licentious life, and bid him think of his soul; but he replied, 'You wish that I should give some money to the gluttonous priests?—Not an obol. I have learned from discreeter men than you that all women are common, and that this is a sin of no moment.' These were his last words; for, wishing to repel his wife, who stood at his side, with his foot, he overthrew with the blow a soldier who sat near; and so his hands were held down, till, wearied with struggling, he expired."

In fact, Clementius and Ebrard, at this time in the next town to Soissons, were leaders of this secret heresy, which held that the Christian dispensation was all a delusion; who annulled infant baptism, abhorred the sacrament of the altar, condemned marriage, recommended horrible vices, and practised the most atrocious profanations of the Eucharist. "So that," continues this holy abbot, "if you read St. Augustin, you will be convinced that what was formerly practised by more learned men has descended to the rustics, who, while they pretend to hold fast the apostolic life, embrace the system of the Manichæans."

Being summoned by the Bishop of Soissons, Lisiard, an illustrious man, and being asked why they wished to have another Church and become heretics, Clement answered, "Have you not read in the gospel, 'Beati eritis?'" for, being illiterate, he understood it as hæreticos; and he thought that heretics were so called, as hereditarii, doubtless, of God. The bishop had them exorcised; and Clement, to the infinite joy of the Church, was absolved, though by a judgment only used in the secular courts *. The one who confessed his error and was impenitent, was, with another, thrown into chains. The bishop went to the council of Beauvais, to consult with the other bishops what ought to be done; but in the mean time, the people, fearing the clerical softness, clericalem verens mollitiem, ran to the prison, led them out of the city, and burnt them †. But it was in the south of France that these errors had sunk

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xiv. 138.

† Guibert de Novigent. de Vita Propria, lib. iii. 16.

the deepest. On the death of Raymond V., the good Count of Toulouse, his son and successor, Raymond VI., partly through policy and partly through congeniality of views and manners, favoured the Manichæans, and from that time the persecutions against the Catholics began. It is to be observed, that the infection spread with more rapidity among the great, into whose houses the heretics had introduced themselves; so that at the head of this war against the authority and doctrine of the Church appeared the Counts of Foix and of Comminge, the Viscount of Bearn, the Senechal of the King of England, who commanded in Aquitaine, and a number of gentlemen, under whose authority the teachers insulted all who remained constant. In general, the nobles of Guienne, Languedoc, and Provence, protected them either secretly or openly, and received from them the tithes which they refused to pay to the ministers of the altar. Such was the state of things when St. Dominick and Don Diego, bishop of Osma, arrived at Montpellier, where they found many Cistercian abbots who had been vainly labouring to recall these wanderers to the true fold. St. Dominick, the loving minion of the Christian faith, had already made a convert in the person of his host, who had received him to hospitality on his passage through Toulouse. Before commencing his missionary labours, while in his retreat at Osma, where he began to have no other place of repose but the church, and no other bed but the steps of the altar, what he demanded of God with the greatest fervour was a perfect charity, by which he might be brought to the closest resemblance with the Saviour of the world. Then, having gained license to fight against an erring and degenerate world, with sage doctrine and good-will to help, as Dante says, forth on his great apostleship he fared, like torrent bursting from a lofty vein, and dashing against the stocks of heresy, smote fiercest where resistance was most stout. His first measure was to lay down solemn rules to guide the missionary labours. He showed that persuasion and example were to be the only weapons employed, that they were to tread in the steps of the apostles, to preach and live like them, to go about on foot, without money, opposing to the depths of Satan and to the pride of heresy only the humility and the patience of God; for that only, by so doing, they could

hope to reform by degrees the manners of the clergy, confound the hypocrisy of the heretics, and guard the faithful against their seductions. The legate approved of these proposals in the assembly of Montpellier, and declared that this rule was to be thenceforth obligatory on all missionaries. Thus began, in 1206, the ten years which St. Dominick employed in combating the Albigenses, until the fourth council of Lateran. With no other aid but what he expected from heaven, with no other sword but the word of God, he fearlessly devoted himself to preach through all these regions, amidst a ferocious population and a corrupt nobility, interested in the success of the revolt. He had already made innumerable conversions among the poor, when Raymond VI., refusing to give security to his Catholic subjects, by withdrawing his protection from the enemies of faith, was excommunicated by Peter de Castelnau, legate of the holy see. The sentence was soon revoked; a conference was proposed and accepted; the legate and the count met at St. Gilles; but as Raymond was evidently only deceiving the ecclesiastical authority, and seeking to gain time for his manœuvres, the latter withdrew, though threatened, for so doing, in such a manner, that the consuls and citizens, fearing what might happen, sent officers to protect his person as far as the banks of the Rhone, where he passed the night in a hostel; but the next morning, after offering the holy mysteries, as he proposed to cross the river, a servant of the count, who had followed him and slept in the same hostel that night, approached and assassinated him, and then fled back to his master.

Our limits do not admit of my describing the sufferings of St. Dominick, and the heroic patience with which he laboured to save this perishing people. The Catholic ecclesiastics were now driven from their Churches; landed proprietors were obliged to fly with their families, and to ask their bread from door to door; bands of armed men, to the number of from six to eight thousand, ravaged the plains, committing atrocities hardly conceivable. Philip Augustus defeated and slew ten thousand of them, in Berry; but while he drove them out of his states, they were received into those of Raymond VI. Such was the origin of the crusade that was preached against them; but it is an error to suppose that the

inquisition commenced at this time; for the Albigenses were open enemies, defending their cause by force of arms. St. Dominick only laboured in preaching, and disputing, and absolving sinners—in omni patientia et doctrina. The very guides, who were treacherously conducting him through false ways, were converted by the spectacle of his patience. His arms were a chaplet; for it was at this epoch that he formed the rosary into a regular devotion, in order to lead the people from vain disputations to meditation, with prayer, on the mysteries of the Man-God. The contemporary writers, who describe all his actions in such minute detail, make no mention whatever of his having been present either at the slaughter on the storming of Beziers, or at the great victory at Muret, where Simon de Montfort defeated the combined army, amounting to 100,000 men, of the King of Aragon, and of the Counts of Foix and Toulouse. The crucifix pierced with arrows, which is shown at Toulouse as having been carried by him on the latter occasion, cannot therefore be admitted as evidence. The ancient writers, on the contrary, attest that he remained during the whole of that time in the church, at prayer. His example was followed by many who had engaged in this warfare. Suera Gomez had left the court of Don Sancho I., king of Portugal, in 1208, to join the army of the crusaders in Languedoc, proposing nothing else but to bear arms in defence of the Church; but being moved by the sermons or conversation of the apostolic man, he resolved ever afterwards to walk in his footsteps; and he deserved to be reckoned among the sixteen first who embraced the order of preachers. Moreover, Touron proves against the Bollandists, that St. Dominick never took part in the rigorous judgments pronounced against the heretics. It is not the question whether he had the right or not to deliver to the secular arm those who refused to abjure, but it is a matter of fact that he never did deliver any one to the secular arm; but, on the contrary, that he delivered some from it. An abbot of Citeaux, with three of his monks, had been seized at a quarter of a league from Carcassone, by Guillaume de Rochefort, an ardent persecutor of the Catholics. The abbot and one of the monks was slain, a third dangerously wounded, and the fourth escaped. The crusaders, in the first moments of exasperation, condemned some

of the Manichæans to the flames if they refused to retract. As they were leading them to the stake, St. Dominick presented himself, and implored pardon for the youngest, Raymond de Grossi, who obtained it, though obstinate in his error. From these scenes of violence the man of peace and mercy withdrew into Italy, meditating more durable and efficacious means of correcting the evil, and more conformable to the religion of the Son of God. At Rome he obtained the approval of the new order which was to revive the sacerdotal spirit among the clergy, to send preachers through all lands, and to win back, by sanctity of life, by wisdom of discourse, by mercy and moderation of conduct, those who had been enticed from the ways of truth and holiness *.

Such was the spirit of this great apostle of the thirteenth century, the hallowed wrestler, gentle to his own, and to his enemies terrible!—that is, as the Mother of Christ is terrible, and not otherwise; for his zeal was that which comes from God, that which is the perfection of love, which makes blessed saints whom Christ appoints to be his helpmates—that of which the angelic doctor says, "Quælibet prava quæ viderit corrigere satagit; si nequit, tolerat et gemit †." It was a zeal always regulated by the light of God, conducted by his Spirit, accompanied by wisdom, sweetness, and a compassionate charity for the men whose errors it combated, preaching by word and by example the renouncement of every thing calculated to incline the heart to cruelty or accustom it to view with indifference the danger or suffering of others. "Who doubts," says Louis of Grenada, "that this spirit of charity, this ardent desire of the glory of God and of the salvation of men, is the first and best master of the art of preaching ‡?"

When the holy Dominick first came to Montpellier, pious abbots, holy prelates, apostolic legates, who had toiled for a long time in vain, were returning from that ungrateful vineyard, saying with an ancient prophet, "We sought to heal Babylon, and she would not be healed! Let us abandon her; let each one return to his

* Touron, Vie de S. Dom.
† S. Thom. 1, 2, Q. 28, A. 4.
‡ Rethor. de l'Eglise, i. 10.

country." Without blaming their resolution, who must not admire the persevering zeal of the Spanish missionary, hoping against hope, exhorting them in season and out of season, waiting with patience for God's time, and resolving never to cease but with life labouring for their salvation; enduring all things, as if to him alone these words had been addressed, "God has given his life for us, and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren?"

It was not, however, alone in the penalties exercised against these desperate men, that examples of the encroachments of the secular court and of the popular power upon the ecclesiastical jurisdiction can be found. There are many instances which, at a different epoch, bear testimony to the same fact.

The year 1317 beheld a deed of horror, when Hugues Gerard, bishop of Cahors, for having sought by enchantments to shorten the life of Pope John XXII., and for many other crimes, was deposed, degraded, and condemned to do penance for the rest of his days in prison. This was the ecclesiastical sentence; but Bernard Guido, a contemporary author, relates that after his deposition and degradation the secular court seized upon him, and by its decree he was committed to the flames *. A more remarkable instance was the punishment of the knights Templars. Nicolaus de Freaville, a learned Dominican, and one of the most sublime preachers of his time, was appointed, along with two other cardinals, by Pope Clement V., to terminate their cause; and Touron relates that all the credit of these three cardinals was exerted to save Jacques de Molay and his companions from the punishment to which the king condemned them, and which, in spite of the ecclesiastical remonstrance, he made them suffer on the same day †.

We have before had occasion to remark, in general, as an historical fact, that in proportion as men adopted principles and views that had a tendency to withdraw them from a close connexion with the holy see, their notions of discipline became more rigid, and their administrative proceedings more severe. In France, wherever

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 11.

† Id. tom. ii. liv. 9.

we find a disposition to recommend the exercise of a violent zeal, in the civil power, to repress offences against religion, and to approve of acts which had been deemed too rigorous by the Popes, we shall be sure to find, in the same persons, the praise of Gallican liberties and of French, in opposition to Ultramontane theologians. The sentence against Savonarola at Florence, and his horrible doom, were levelled rather in defiance than in defence of religion. The infamy of his death is shared by some of the magistrates, and by Ludovicus Sforza. On being degraded, the sentence was read aloud; and when he heard the words that he was cut off "ab ecclesia"—"Militante" was his immediate reply, which was his last word.—"A proud answer, in my judgment," remarks Petrus Delphinus, who, in the judgment of others, perhaps, would have appeared wiser had he held his peace rather than divulged it *.

Such was the horror inspired by his death in the noble race of Est, so celebrated for its fidelity in all times to the holy see, that Hercules of that blood, Duke of Ferrara, sent to the gallows a poet who had insulted his memory in certain vile calumnious songs which he composed after his execution, and he loudly complained to the magistrates of Florence for granting impunity to those who repeated them.

The origin of capital punishment against heretics was not from ecclesiastical power, but from the temporal princes, as may be seen in the codes of Justinian and Theodosius, under the title "De Hæreticis." The third council of Lateran declared against it in the twenty-seventh canon, saying, "Ecclesiasticam disciplinam, sacerdotali contentam judicio, cruentas non efficere ultiones."

With respect to the jealousy and suspicion excited in so many breasts whenever the name of the Inquisition is pronounced, there are many reflections suggested by history, which should at least stop the mouths of passionate declaimers; as for instance, when it records the fact, that the Inquisition in France was established by Pope Alexander IV. at the prayer of St. Louis. In his constitution concerning heretics, he charges his barons, and all persons in authority, to bring heretics before the

* Annal. Camaldul. lib. lxviii.

ecclesiastical tribunals, that in their presence such persons being condemned, all hatred, interest, bribery, fear, favour, and affection, being set aside, they may proceed to fulfil their duty respecting them*. We find that the holy see has in all ages been constrained to consent and give sanction to measures at the prayer of local authorities, whether civil or ecclesiastical, in distant countries, which might be thought injurious to the interests of her own discipline; and how unjust is it to forget this when she is obliged similarly to consent to reprehensible measures proposed by the civil power, which may have an air of being designed to favour them? In Portugal the majority of the officers of the Inquisition are laymen, and the duty of ecclesiastics in regard to it is little more than to act as members of a court of inquiry into the nature of books intended for general circulation, and the tendency of opinions. The English writer who published Letters to Osorius remarks, that "it sprung from imperious necessity, and owes its origin to the great principle of self-defence; and that it has saved society in these countries from numberless evils: of which fact the good and peaceable are so well aware, that when a desperate faction, assuming the sacred name of liberty, had obtained its destruction, the great body of the people was clamorous for its re-establishment." Bourgoign is an author who can hardly be suspected of favouring whatever bears the appearance of an ecclesiastical sanction, and therefore I shall cite his words with the more courage: "The fact is," saith he, "the tribunal of the Inquisition, as I said in 1789, and I repeat it, in spite of the critics, for the fourth time in 1805, is not near so fearful a thing as one imagines in foreign countries. I confess that its forms are calculated to alarm those who would reckon upon its equity, though these include the previous act of three private admonitions, to refrain from giving public scandal, attention to which would stop all further proceedings. Without undertaking the task, so replete with odium, of making its apology, I must confess also, in order to render homage to truth, that if one can pardon its forms and object, the Inquisition might be cited in our days as a model of justice; and after all, the truth is, that, with a little circumspection as to religion, one can live

* Ap. Duchesne, Hist. Franc. Script. V.

as tranquilly in Spain as in any other country of Europe *."

Writers on the canon law have shown the falsehood of the opinion that thoughts were judged by the Inquisition as by men who have the power of confessors: for as the church by itself directly could not prohibit an act merely internal, so it could not inflict a censure upon a heresy which was not developed manifestly by the exterior act. The Inquisition took cognizance only of Catholics, and of those who laboured to pervert them. It passed over Jews and all persons born in heresy or schism, who were tolerated by the state †. There are, at all events, several modern readers who require to be reminded, if not apprized, that the clergy were as much the objects of the attention of the Inquisition, as the laity, of which there can be no more striking instance cited in proof than the arrest of Bartholomew de Carranza, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of Spain in the year 1559, when he was imprisoned at Valladolid, whose subsequent history can of itself throw great light on the real nature of that institution. Neither the church of Toledo, nor the fathers of the council then assembled at Trent, nor even the Holy See, were able to prevent this national, and we may add, in a great measure, laical tribunal, from keeping a pious and learned prelate seven years in captivity; and nothing short of the inflexible firmness and courage of Pope Pius V. at the representation of the apostolic commissioners who had been sent into Spain, was able to overcome its resolution not to have the cause transferred out of the dominions of the Catholic king. Even after the removal of the Primate to Rome, so many obstacles were thrown in the way of coming to a decision by the authorities in Spain, who persisted in affirming that the king's majesty was called in question by this appeal, that it was not till after some years he could be absolved, and but shortly before his holy death ‡.

Let us relieve this dark subject by exhibiting mercy contrasted with the most severe forms of human severity. Let us enter the prison of Sixtus, of Sienna. This learned man, born of Jewish parents, had been induced in youth

* Tableau de l'Espagne, vol. i. p. 392—5.

† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. lib. iv. tit. viii.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv.

to embrace the Christian religion; but having subsequently contracted various errors contrary to faith, which he successively renounced and repeated, was a second time arrested, tried, and condemned to death, as having relapsed to heresy, after a formal abjuration. At this time Michael Gislheri, who was afterwards Pope Pius V. filled the office of commissioner general of the Inquisition, and being a man of mercy, it was one of his constant practices to visit prisoners, with the view of consoling them, and moving them to repentance. The situation of Sixtus excited his deepest compassion; and he desired ardently to save him, notwithstanding his apparent obstinacy, and the inflexible rigour of the law, to which he had become amenable. The holy friar redoubled his prayers and his visits, and at length, by long conversations, succeeded in working a complete change in that diseased mind. His next step was to repair to the Pope, Julius III., throw himself at his feet, and implore pardon for the prisoner, who not only obtained his liberty, but even permission to enter the order of St. Dominic.

The Dedicatory Epistle prefixed to his Bibliotheca Sancta, which he presented to Pius V. in 1566, contains an affecting allusion to this deliverance. "Under your auspices," he says, "most holy father, I have dared to place this book, since it was you who formerly drew me from the gates of hell, to render me to the light of truth, and to a more perfect state. When you deigned to receive me into your order, you clothed me with your own hands and with your own habits. You adopted me then as your spiritual son. Oh, with what goodness, with what sweetness, with what liberality, have you always treated me, ever loading me with new favours in this celebrated order. Certainly I should be very ungrateful if I did not glory in confessing publicly that your kindness to me exceeds what I can express, and that there is no man on earth to whom I am more indebted than to you *."

The only comment, perhaps, on this narrative will be to cry, "But how can an inquisitor be styled a man of mercy?" It skills not citing historic facts where sounds can awaken deep-rooted aversion; but let an English Pro-

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv.

testant be heard, attesting what he saw. "Those who expect to see the grand Inquisitor of Portugal a doleful figure, with eyes of reproof and malediction, would be disappointed," says the author of Vathek; "a pleasanter or more honest countenance than that kind heaven has blessed him with, one has seldom the comfort of looking upon." At Madrid he sees the prelate who fills the same office in Spain, and he says, "that he has not only the look, but the character of beneficence." If after this he could have been prevailed on to look into the history of such men, he would have had the difficulty explained, without injury to the science of Lavater.

Touron, the historian of the Dominican order, in recording the lives of Vincent of Lisbon, Gui Maramaldi of Naples, and of other friars who had to discharge the painful office of Inquisitors, takes care to remark, that it was not so much by the fear of punishment as by persuasion, learning, and charity, that they provided against the contagion of heresy. Preaching and sanctity of life were the only weapons used in converting the Moors, Turks, and hereticks, by men whom religion authorised, and of whom the Church approved. You speak of intolerance; I can only see the pious and indefatigable labours of men devoted to the study of oriental languages and to preaching. "The poniard of faith," used by Raymond des Martins, the Dominican of Barcelona, with which he converts the Jews and Sarassins, turning their own arms against themselves, is very different from the sword of the magistrate, or the bayonets of the military. It was with his Apology for the Christian Religion, written in Arabic, that Philip Guadagnolus, of Malleano, gained such triumphs over the Mahometans, to which Pompeius Sarnellius alludes in the verses which he prefixed to the Italian version:

I Liber felix, nova monstra questus,
Ut leves omni populos timore,
Nec sinas hostes fidei per orbem
Pergere inultos.

Non venenatis gravida sagittis
Indiges Mauri pharetra, nec arcu,
Est potis fortes calamus Philippi
Frangere turmas.

Quot tibi cedent, monitis nefandi
Qui fidem præstant Mahometis, omnes
Namque vincentur, secuturi ovantes
Dogmata Christi *.

Hear how William of Tripoli speaks in the conclusion of his great work against the Koran. "Thus, without the terror of material arms, by the sole virtue of the word of God, we have seen the Sarassins in great numbers present themselves to demand the baptism of Jesus Christ. He who attests this fact has already received into the fold of the good pastor more than a thousand docile sheep, by the grace of God, to whom alone belong praise and glory for evermore †."

What a contrast between the barbarous intolerance of men in modern times, who hold out force and political subjection as their best logic, and the wondrous union of charity and erudition which distinguished the propagators of the Catholic faith in Spain during the middle ages! Behold St. Thomas of Aquin writing his immortal work Contra Gentes at the prayer of St. Raymond de Pegnafort, for the purpose of enabling the missionaries to convert the Moors. Behold the Kings of Arragon and Castile founding two colleges for Dominicans, one at Tunis, and the other in Murcia, for the same purpose. What can be more noble than the respect for the dignity and liberty of the human mind, which such acts as these display? Accordingly we find the Moorish princes, and the king of Tunis in particular, desiring the friendship of St. Raymond, who replies with all benignity to their advances, and avails himself of their favour to preach Jesus Christ. Writing to Father Humbert, the fifth general of his order, he assures him, that already 10,000 Sarassins had implored the grace of baptism. When were mercy and mildness beheld, if they were not in his conduct to the Jews and Mahometans, who sought instruction, to whom he acted the part of a father, providing even for their corporal necessities with great alms? If James I. at length published an edict, which banished from his dominions all who adhered to the Koran and to the Talmud, it was believed that necessity required that measure,

* Mutii Phœbonii Hist. Marsorum, lib. iii. 6. in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. i. 3.

so frightful was the corruption which the contagion of their manners had caused among the people. For the same reason St. Raymond advised him to establish the Inquisition, to prevent the heresy of the Manichæans from contaminating the whole nation; and let it be remembered, that this was the man of mercy, who at an age exceeding eighty years, travelled from Spain to Rome, in order to persuade Alexander IV. to pardon Manfred, who had usurped Sicily.

By referring to the secular arm, the Church did not sanction the acts which sometimes followed. "Since the heretics cannot be restrained by milder courses, what remains," says Leo the Great, "to prevent them from destroying others, but to subject them to the more tenacious bonds of the secular laws, yet in such a manner as not to violate the ecclesiastical mildness *." Even in much later times a demand for that intervention did not imply a desire to have the penalties of the secular courts inflicted, as is evident from the terms of the brief addressed to St. Peter of Verona, and Vivian of Bergamo, by the Pope Innocent IV. after the death of Frederick II. charging them to repair to the bishop's diocesan synod at Cremona, and to labour to extirpate the Manichæan heresy; for the words in conclusion are these: "Against those who will not submit to the orders of the Church, you will proceed according to the canons, imploring, if it be necessary, the succour of the secular arm:" similar to that passage, in which St. Bernard, calling upon Suger, as "a great prince in the kingdom," to oppose certain evils by force, adds, "vim autem appello, quod ad ecclesiasticam pertinet disciplinam †." In fact, at that time the office of Inquisitor was one of protection and defence, and not of aggression. In many places, as at Gaoche, a town near Bergamo, the influence of the Manichæans was such, that the inhabitants durst not make open profession of the Catholic faith; and whoever ventured to preach it to them, had every reason to expect the fate of St. Peter Martyr, whose assassination they procured with the sum of forty Milanese franks. The persons against whom the Inquisitors of the faith in Italy had to act, were in general formidable men, invested with authority under the protection of such princes as Frede-

* Epist. xciii. † Epist. ccclxxvi.

rick II. and the tyrant Eccelino; the latter of whom was the declared friend of the Manichæans: to send one who should cite him before the Pope, was like sending a man to death. Yet Innocent IV. found a person ready to execute this commission, through the sole motive of the glory of God. Roland of Cremona was the friar who was deputed, in 1244, to discharge this perilous office; and he performed it with unflinching courage. The office of defending the faith in the northern countries required the same intrepidity, and was discharged in the same spirit of mercy and moderation. How great was the benignity of John Nyder, the Dominican and Papal Nuncio, who was deputed by the Council of Basle to treat with the Hussites! It was such that even the chiefs of that sect esteemed him, and admitted him to enter into communication with them. But when Divine Providence permitted that these men, who were drunk with the blood of the saints, should meet with a sanguinary punishment from the hands of Mainard de Neuhaux, a gentleman of Bohemia, Nyder and the ecclesiastical authority had neither advised such measures, nor could they have prevented their occurrence *. It is a great mistake to suppose, that in using the weapons of true Christian warfare, the zeal of theologians who defended the faith rendered them, in the estimation of their contemporaries, merciless men. In the fifteenth century it was the part of mercy to protect the people from the ruin which threatened the dearest interests of the human race, not excluding assuredly the material condition of the poor.

Sanctes Pagninus, of Lucca, a learned Dominican friar, having died in the convent at Lyons, where he had been for some years residing, was followed to his grave by nearly the whole population of that city. More than 300 of the principal citizens walked, carrying flambeaux, and the grief appeared general. Roter happened to be at Lyons at that time, and having asked what was the reason why such extraordinary honours were paid to the deceased, he was told that the citizens ascribed the preservation of their faith, in a great measure, to his zeal; for, they said, if that learned friar had not raised his voice like a trumpet, to warn the people of the danger which

* Touron, tom. iii.

threatened them, perhaps at that day the whole city would have professed itself Lutheran *.

The zeal of Pius V. in repressing public immoralities, had rendered him formidable to the profligate; many of whom came with the faithful to behold his body exposed after death in the church of St. Peter, and could not conceal their joy on being delivered from such an enemy; yet we are told the sight of his countenance, though the pale hand of death lay on it, produced such an effect upon many sinners, that from that hour they renounced the ways of vice.

With respect to the toleration of other religions in a Catholic state, the fact is, that whatever political evil might be apprehended, the measures taken against them were adopted by the will of the temporal magistrate, and not by the suggestions of the ecclesiastical authority. The words of the hymn for the vespers of all saints—auferte gentem perfidam credentium de finibus—were composed in reference to the invasion of the Normans, who then threatened the extirpation of the Christian religion. The continuator of Vincent of Beauvois' Mirror, who at all events was deeply instructed in the discipline and doctrine of the Church, even says expressly, that "the rites of infidels may be tolerated by human government; for as human government must imitate the divine government, and we see that the omnipotent God tolerates many evils which he might destroy, lest worse should follow; so also must the human government permit evils to exist lest, by removing them, he should injure the good, or create worse evil †." The Church herself showed the example; in allusion to which Ives de Chartres says to Hugo, Archbishop of Lyons: "If you wish to collect examples from past and present time, we shall find that the princes of the Church have been accustomed to tolerate many things for the necessity of the times, and to dissemble many things for the utility of persons ‡. In this sense the profound words of Æschylus expressed a maxim, which has ever guided the rulers of the Catholic Church. "God hath given the chief

* Id. tom. iv. liv. xxv.

† Vincent. Bellovacensis, Speculum Morale, lib. iii. pars iii. dis. 29.

‡ Ivonis Carnot, Epist. lv.

strength to all mediums; but He regards other things, that is, things immoderate, with an eye without medium."

Παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος
Θεὸς ὤπασεν, ἀλλὰ
Ἄλλᾳ δ' ἄλλ' ἐφορεύει *.

The heathens had a saying, "he who hates vices must hate men; qui vitia odit, homines odit†." But the Catholic philosophy knew of no such dilemma. "Let the ruler and magistrate remember," says Louis of Blois, "that he cannot please God if he hate any man; therefore he must pity sinners, while he does not favour sins: let him punish vices, not men; and let him not repeat the faults of men to others, where he cannot hope to make them, or those who hear him, better; let him love, with a sincere affection of heart, the man whose imperfections and negligences he punishes; and let him show towards him a serene countenance, and a desire of comforting him in words and actions; but let him never dissemble the injury done to God, and religion, and the soul, on account of human friendship ‡." How pernicious were the errors of Abailard, and yet the abbot William, in the very letter in which he excites St. Bernard and the Bishop of Chartres to protect the Church of God against their infections, speaks of their author in these terms: "Dilexi et ego eum, et diligere vellem, Deus testis est; sed in causa hac nemo umquam proximus mihi erit, vel amicus §."

With respect to the Jews, who were an object of popular detestation, on account of their usurious iniquities, and oppression of the poor, the conduct of the church and of her ministers was such as to extort the admiration even of her most bitter enemies. It is true, we find in early times several decrees to secure a separation between the Jews and Christians, and certain measures enjoined against them for this purpose. In the year 1337 a council of three provinces, in the monastery of St. Ruffus, near Avignon, decreed that no Christian should keep any servant or maid of the Jewish sect. All Jews were to wear upon their breast the figure of a wheel, and

* Eumenid. 529.
† Plin. Epist. viii. 22.
‡ Ludovic. Blos. Enchirid. Parvulorum, lib. i. doc. x. Append.
§ Epist. St. Bern. cccxxvi.

Christians were not to contract marriage with them *. At Bologna, in 1417, the Jews, whose usuries were restrained the following year, were ordered to wear a leaden mark upon their breasts, and to close their shops on festivals †. St. Vincent Ferrier obtained from Don John II. King of Castile, an edict to oblige the Jews and Moors to bear some particular mark to distinguish them from Christians, because he had observed the injurious moral effects of their intercourse with the Christians, especially with those that had been recently converted ‡.

Without believing that the Jews were guilty of all the crimes of which they were accused in different countries, no doubt often merely in consequence of the alarmed imagination of the people, it is incontestable that, on some occasions, they were justly convicted of shedding Christians' blood, through hatred of Jesus Christ. The murder of the little Simon, for instance, in the city of Trent, by three Jewish Rabbins, on the night preceding Good Friday, in 1475, was judicially examined, and verified by the jurisconsult, John Sala, whom the money of the Jews could not corrupt. It was on this occasion that Leonard de Perugia, General of the Dominicans, wrote to many superiors of his order, in different countries, not to animate them against the Jews, but to desire that they should prevail on the rich, by giving liberal alms, to preserve poor Christians from the temptation of offering themselves as servants in Jewish families §. Pope Innocent III. might well ordain, through the council, that on the day when all Christendom celebrated the passion of the Lord, the Jews should not openly show themselves, lest the minds of the people should be inflamed against them. Independent of all these considerations one cannot be surprised at the enmity which was evinced by the people towards the Jews, when we consider, that besides the nature of their position relative to the mysteries of faith, they were the ministers of oppressors, and professed usurers. The bishop of Auxerre informed Pope Innocent III. that no one durst appear as an accuser against the

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 81.

† Sigonii de Ep. Bonon. liv. iv.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 17.

§ Touron, tom. iii. liv. xxii.

manifest usurers in his diocese, through fear of the princes and great men who protected them *. No Christian witness, however unexceptionable, could appear against them. Many secular princes appointed Jews to be their ministers of exaction upon the poor widows and orphans who were despoiled of their inheritance, while the Jews took possession of castles and villas. To correct these evils the Pontiff wrote to the Count of Nevers, saying, "Blasphemers of the Christian name ought not to be cherished by Christian princes for the oppression of the Lord's servants †." Nevertheless, he judged it necessary to mitigate the decree of the Lateran Council against usurers, on the ground that where there would be much correction required, there should be a relaxation of severity ‡. By his command, however, those who undertook to fight for fraternal defence against the cruel enemies of the Church in the South of France were to be absolved by the Jews from their payment of usurious debts, and delivered from further exaction §; and the same benefit was to be granted to the Crusaders who departed for the Holy Land ||. The usurious gains of the Jews are described by Peter the Venerable ¶.

Hear how Barabas speaks of himself in Marlowe's tragedy of the Jew of Malta.—

> "Then after that was I an usurer,
> And with extorting, cozening, forfeiting,
> And tricks belonging unto brokery,
> I fill'd the jails with bankrupts in a year,
> And with young orphans planted hospitals;
> And every moon made some or other mad;
> And now and then one hung himself for grief,
> Pinning upon his breast a long, great scroll
> How I with interest tormented him.
> But mark how I am blest for plaguing them:
> I have as much coin as will buy the town.
> I have been zealous in the Jewish faith,
> Hardhearted to the poor, a covetous wretch,
> That would, for lucre's sake, have sold my soul.
> A hundred for a hundred I have ta'en;
> And now for store of wealth may I compare
> With all the Jews in Malta."

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. x. 61. † Epist. lib. x. 190.
‡ Inn. III. Epist. liv. xi. 62.
§ Inn. III. Epist. liv. xi. 158, 159. || Id. liv. xi. 185.
¶ Epist. lib. iv. 36. Bibliothec. Cluniac.

If you will believe the ancient historians, this is not an exaggerated picture. "The first Jew that came to fix his residence in Nola," says Ambrose Leo, in his account of that city, "was Vilielmus, a surgeon and physician, who arrived there in 1440. Our old people say that he was then a poor man in tattered raiment, only rags stitched together; and that when it was known a Jew had arrived, the whole city was moved, and the inhabitants went about looking for him, as if they expected to see one of those who had fixed our Lord Jesus on the cross. He had not been long there, when others of his tribe arrived, and, by degrees, as many as twenty houses were occupied by Jews. The usury they practised was so great, that the interest used to equal the principal in a short time: they acquired all sorts of precious objects of art in this manner, and became possessed of immense riches. Vilielmus, now an old man, purchased great houses in the Via Vincanciana, and a farm at the Tower Martiana. But they inhabited Nola only seventy years; for in 1509, they were expelled from all Campania and Calabria*." The statute of St. Louis, concerning the Jews, declares, that for the salvation of his soul, and for that of his father, King Lewis, he has decreed, with the common council of his barons, that they will in future contract no debts with the Jews, and that those already contracted shall be paid off at three specified periods†. Philippe de Valois banished the Jews from France, to get rid of his own debt, which, in a very short time, mounted from 400,000 francs to two millions. In the thirteenth century, they had obtained enormous riches, by the exercise of a most shameless traffic, impoverishing the Christians, and encouraging sacrilegious persons, as in times of less ancient date, only their measures were then conducted in secret, and not under the sanction of governments, by means of mercenary armies. Peter the Venerable relates, that they used to encourage persons to steal for them the precious and sacred vessels and ornaments of the churches, in order that they might apply them to the basest purposes.

Jews, on their conversion, have confessed that they

* Ambros. Leonis de Nola, liv. iii. c. iv. in Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Ap. Duchesne Hist. Franc. Script. tom. v.

used to employ their Christian servants, whom they had perverted, to bring secretly from the Church the blessed Eucharist *. Relying on the protection of the secular princes, whose hearts they seduced by gifts, the Jews, in the thirteenth century, treated the Christian people with scorn and defiance. By command of the princes, the butchers used to deliver their animals to be killed by the Jews, according to their rite, giving them the first choice of the meat, and reserving the residue for the Christians. The milk which was sold for nourishing children, was similarly made to pass first through their hands. At the vintage, the Jew, according to his rite, pressed out the purest juice of the grape, which he retained for himself, leaving the rest, as if contaminated, for the faithful, and to serve for the sacrament of the blood of Christ †. In the time of Pius V., it was proved that the Jews furnished facility to thieves and robbers, by receiving the goods which they stole; that they used to introduce immorality into families, by tampering with the domestics; and propagate superstition among the people, by pretending to practice magic. By Pius V., they were ordered to leave the ecclesiastical states, with the exception of two cities, and this was deemed an act of necessity; the protection of the people requiring it ‡. In Ancona, and in Rome itself, they were permitted to remain in a quarter appropriated to themselves. At Florence, as soon as four mounts of piety were established, with the alms collected after the sermons of Jerome Savonarola, the magistrates banished the Jewish usurers from the city §. In France there is a remarkable example of the same policy furnished by Humbert II. in the fourteenth century, the last of the dauphins, and one of the best and most merciful of men, who delivered his subjects from many ancient burdens, and had, at first, after the example of his predecessors, permitted the Jews to exercise their commerce in his states, on condition of their paying him certain subsidies; but experience having convinced him that these leeches would have drained the people by their usuries, he revoked the permission, and abolished their

* Inn. III. Epist. liv. xvi. c. lxxxiv.
† Inn. III. Epist. lib. x. c. cxc.
‡ Hieron. Rubei Hist. Ravenn. liv. xi.
§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. 23.

privileges, preferring to lose the revenue which he drew from them, than suffer the ruin of his subjects *. The laws of the Visigoths against the Jews in Spain were certainly most severe †; and the act of Ferdinand and Isabella, which put an end to their interference in the affairs of that kingdom until within the last three years, was blamed by many contemporary writers; yet it should be remarked, that the communication with the professed Jews, and the pretended Christians, had been proved to be not only injurious to the weak in faith, but also, at that particular moment, highly dangerous to the state. It was in consequence of their maintaining secret intelligence with the Moors, and of their avowed detestation of the Christians, that Thomas de Torquemade advised Ferdinand and Isabella to order all the Jews who would not embrace the faith to leave Castile and Arragon within four months, granting them permission to dispose of their property, and to carry away with them whatever they possessed; so that, at least, it was a disinterested policy, considering the prodigious quantity of gold and silver, jewels and precious merchandize which they carried with them out of Spain; and, methinks, the vengeance which they are likely to take in our days, is enough to make the most ardent champions of toleration relax a little in their outcry in regard to it.

Whatever may be thought of these acts of government, we ought to recollect, that they were only in conformity with the voice of the people; and that, in later times, where the Catholic religion had been renounced, they were called for still by the people, as measures necessary for their own protection. Among the demands of the Lutheran peasants of the Rhingaw, when they rose in revolt, one was, that lodging should be refused to the Jews, on account of their unworthy usuries ‡. Nevertheless, the conduct of the Church towards the Jews was at all times characterized by the same spirit of wisdom and mercy, furnishing an admirable contrast to that of the secular princes, who were alternately their slaves and their persecutors. As Hurter remarks, the relation of

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. xiii.

† Leg. Wisigothorum, lib. ix.

‡ Gnodalius apud Schardt, rerum Ger. Script. tom. ii. 142-3.

the Israelites with the Christians, amongst whom they lived, was not certainly influenced by that false philanthropy which represents, as synonymous, persecution and the determination to preserve the Christianity of a state; but neither was it deserving of censure, on the ground of intolerance. Pope Innocent III. declared, that Christian piety was bound to admit and sustain the presence of the Jews *; and that it was well pleasing to God, that the dispersed Jewish people should find a habitation under Christian princes, who, through Judah and Israel, were to be blest †. In this spirit, was the constitution of the same pontiff, when the Jews applied to him for protection; in which he said, "Although they persist in their obduracy, since they ask for the assistance of our defence, we, according to the mildness of Christian piety, and following in the steps of our predecessors of happy memory, Calixtus, Eugene, Alexander, Clement, and Celestin, admit their petition, and grant them the shield of our protection. We decree that no Christian shall constrain them to apply for baptism, or injure either their persons or goods, or change the customs of the region which they inhabit, to their prejudice. Let no one insult them in the celebration of their festivals; and to obviate the depravity and avarice of men, we decree, that no one must dare to mutilate or diminish their cemeteries, or ransack their tombs in search of money, under pain of excommunication ‡." All persecution against the Jews was foreign to the Church. Innocent II. had shown a most benign disposition towards them, Alexander III. had restrained the passion of the people, and Gregory IX. raised his voice with energy against the violent and cruel deeds of the crusaders against them. All the bishops and doctors of the Church followed in these footsteps. The bishop of Beziers procured the abolition of a barbarous custom to despite the Jews, that had been annually observed; and long before his time, the prelates of Spain, with great applause from the contemporary Pope, had come forward to protect the Jews against the violence of kings and people §. Alluding to one persecution directed against them, Trithemius, the Benedictine, says, "I know that this displeased greatly the Roman pontiff, a

* Epist. viii. 21. † Ep. vii. 186.

‡ Inn. III. Epist. lib. ii. c. cccii.

§ Hurter, Innocenz III. vol. I. book iii. p. 314.

man most Christian; for he knew that the charges against them, of poisoning the wells, was incredible, as supposing a thing impossible; and many thought, that the Christians who moved this persecution were actuated by avarice, and not by piety *.

Albert of Aix says, that God punished the first crusaders for the cruelties they exercised upon the Jews. "For God is just," he continues, "and does not wish that force should be used to constrain any one to come to Him." Hear how St. Bernard speaks, on this occasion, in his epistle to the clergy and people of the eastern parts of France:—"Brethren, I admonish you, with the apostle of God, to believe not every spirit. We hear and rejoice that the zeal of God is fervent within you; but it must be according to knowledge. The Jews are not to be persecuted, nor to be slain, nor even to be banished †." He expresses himself still more strongly in his letter to Henry, archbishop of Mayence, when censuring Radulf for exciting the Christians against the Jews:—"O shameless man, to approve of homicide! Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who laid down the sword at the word of Him who had commanded it to be drawn? Art thou greater than the prince of the apostles, who sought from the Lord, Domine, si percutimus in gladio? But thou art instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; that is, in the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God. Otherwise, thou wouldst obey the charge to Peter, Mitte gladium in locum suum. Doth not the Church triumph more abundantly over the Jews day by day, convincing and converting them, than if once for all she were to destroy them with the sword? Is it in vain that the universal prayer of the Church hath been constituted, which is offered for the perfidious Jews, from the rising to the setting sun—that the Lord God would take away the veil from their hearts, and that they might be turned from their darkness to the light of truth? For unless she hoped that they who were incredulous might be brought to believe, it would be superfluous and vain to pray for them. But she knew that all Israel was to be saved. Art thou the man, then, who is to prove liars all the prophets, and to make void all the

* Chronic. Hirsaugiens. an. 849. † Epist. cccIxiii.

treasures of the piety and mercy of Jesus Christ? Thy doctrine is not thine, but it is thy Father's who sent thee. But I believe thou art content to be like thy master, for he was a murderer from the beginning—a liar, and the father of lies. O monstrous science! O infernal wisdom! contrary to the prophets, hateful to the apostles, subversive of piety and grace. O most foul heresy! O execrable sacrilege *!"

When the Christians of Clermont destroyed the synagogue of the Jews, in the year 576, on account of their having ill-treated a Jew who had embraced the faith of Christ, St. Avitus, the bishop of that see, interposed, and forbade that violence should be offered to the Jews; and sending legates to them, said, "I seek not to compel you to confess the Son of God, but I will preach and deliver the salt of wisdom to your breasts; for of you the true Shepherd who suffered for us said, that he had other sheep who were not of His fold, whom He must also bring." On the third day, a great number of the Jews sent to inform him that they were desirous of baptism. Great was the joy of the holy bishop and of all the people. On the night of Pentecost, after celebrating vigils, the prelate proceeded to the baptistery without the walls. The wax tapers burned on all sides, and the lustre of lamps shone around. The whole city put on white. The rejoicing was not less than when Jerusalem deserved to see the Holy Ghost descending upon the apostles. The number of the Jews baptized was five hundred †. Such toleration was nothing but the traditionary manners of the episcopacy. When St. Gallus I., who had preceded Avitus in the same see, died, the Jews themselves followed his bier, mourning and carrying lighted torches ‡.

Rodulph, abbot of St. Tron, had pursued the same line of conduct towards the Jews; and an ancient writer says, that he frequently had a conference with them, not reproving them and condemning them, but softening the hardness of their hearts by gentleness and mild treatment. Therefore he was so much beloved by them, that

* Epist. ccclxv.

† Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 242.

‡ Id. ii. 239.

even their women used to come to see him and speak with him *.

In like manner, St. Sulpitius, bishop of Bourges in the seventh century, by his gentleness is recorded to have converted all the Jews that were in his diocese. No example, however, is more admirable than that of St. Vincent Ferrier, the Dominican. Whole synagogues are said to have been converted by one of his sermons. On one occasion, preaching at Tortosa, he begged of the people to receive with kindness the strangers who were coming, and to yield up their best places to them. In a few minutes this company arrived, composed of all the Jews who formed the synagogue in that city; and most of them, before leaving the church, were converted to Christianity. In the diocese of Valencia, all the Jews, without exception, embraced the Christian religion, in consequence of his sermons; and at Toledo, so few persisted in that belief, that their synagogue was converted into a church. Doubtless his zeal was extraordinary; but can any one convict it of intolerance? At Salamanca, all that he did was to enter their synagogue, holding a cross in his hand, while the Jews were assembled in it, and to entreat them to hear what he had to say. Their astonishment and anger changed to admiration; and the result of that sermon was the baptism of the whole assembly. The synagogue was then changed into a church, which ever after bore the name of the Holy Cross †.

Solicitude for the conversion of the Jews was a remarkable feature in the character of the middle ages. In many churches, as in that of the Magdalen at Paris, it was the custom to offer up public prayers for this object on other days besides Good Friday ‡.

In conclusion, it is but just to admit that even the civil power was sometimes moved by a sense of piety to protect these unfortunate men. The equity which King Charles V. of France evinced, in not suffering the Jews

* Chronic. Abbatiæ S. Trudonis, lib. xi. p. 489, apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. vii.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xvii.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. 1, chap. xi.

to be injured by any fraudulent dealing of persons who would give a false pledge, is recorded by Christine de Pisan, among the proofs of his goodness *. But it was not alone the Jews who experienced the protection of religion. In general no class of men were excluded from the mild forbearance of the Church. It is expressly related of many holy prelates, like St. William, archbishop of Bourges, that with respect to penitents and great sinners, they would never have recourse to the punishments of the civil power which might then be inflicted on them. "The ecclesiastical judge," saith the universal doctor, "ought to punish no one with a corporal pain; but, on the contrary, he should intercede with the secular judge for those who are condemned †." Continually did the Church interpose to stay the temporal sword, and to remind the civil government that some of its laws were inconsistent with the whole spirit of the Christian religion, repeating the words addressed by St. Augustin to a judge, "Noli usque ad mortem, ne cum persequaris peccatum, perdas hominem. Noli usque ad mortem, ut sit quem pœniteat ‡."

Joseph Ciantes, a Dominican, on being appointed to the see of Marsico, a city at the foot of the Apennines, in the kingdom of Naples, found that a scandalous division had existed during the pontificate of four of his predecessors, on the part of the people and clergy of Saponara, who refused to admit the jurisdiction of those prelates. Having cited the chiefs of the revolt before the tribunal of the Rota at Rome, he obtained a sentence against them; to the justice of which tribunal in general we have the testimony of a no less inveterate adversary than Luther, who says, "Nothing deserves praise at Rome but the consistory and the court of the rota, where affairs are conducted and judged with great justice §." When urged, however, to execute this sentence, and told that the King of Spain would send troops to enforce it and compel the refractory to submit, the bishop refused absolutely, saying, "No, I am not the vicar of the charity of Jesus Christ, to make sinners perish, but to labour to

* Livre des fais du Sage Roy, chap. xxiii.
† Alani de Insulis contra Waldenses, c. 22.
‡ Serm. XIII.
§ Michelet, Mem. de Luth. ii.

render them good." His next step was to order public prayers; and then, on a day secretly fixed, with the lively faith of one who hopes all from Jesus Christ, he set out at the head of his clergy, and followed by a multitude of the faithful in fervent supplication. Upon arriving near Saponara, the inhabitants received information of his coming, and hastily closing their gates, armed themselves as if about to sustain a siege. All the inhabitants, men and women, laity and clergy, mounted on the walls. The most violent even threatened to fire upon the prelate if he should continue to advance. Every kind of insulting cry assailed his ears. Nevertheless, this was the moment ordained by Divine Providence for putting an end for ever to these long contestations. Clothed in his pontifical habits, and seated on the trunk of a tree opposite the gate, the apostolic man made a sign to beg that the people would only hear him speak; then, with the Holy Bible in his hand, he began with the words of Jesus Christ: "And if they receive you not, shake off the dust from your feet. Verily I say unto you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." The discourse of the prelate, or rather the word of God on his tongue, struck the hearts of the multitude with astonishment; but when, in conclusion, he actually began to obey the precept, to shake off the dust from his feet, and to turn his back as if departing, in an instant the air resounded with sighs and groans, and supplications. There was, even at that moment, some danger lest the revolted ecclesiastics might be hurled headlong from the top of the walls. The hostile arms instantly disappear—the gates are thrown open, and the people in multitudes press forward to prostrate themselves at the bishop's feet. "We are your sheep," was then the voice heard on every side;—"you are our pastor—treat us as a father, have pity on us, pray the great God to forgive us, enter our city, and dispose of every thing as it seemeth good to you." The gracious words and the sweet seraphic looks of the holy prelate completed this wonderful transformation. He entered the city, took the necessary steps for effecting the required reforms, and on his departure pronounced his solemn benediction. The termination of this disorder was hardly credited at Rome for some time; and Fontana says, that those who

were present could scarcely believe what they saw with their own eyes *.

Such, then, was the spirit and practice of the Church. But it was not so easy to lead the temporal government to the same conclusion, and to make it co-operate with "the Catholic mildness" of an Avitus and an Augustin. In the middle ages, the purity of the religious doctrine and respect for the ecclesiastical authority were generally known and felt by those who possessed wisdom of government, to be the elements of the happiness and grandeur of a nation, as also of the social order and public tranquillity. Hence the suppression of heresy was deemed a matter of state importance, and, independent of every other consideration, an object to secure which all the energies of magistrates were to be employed. Accordingly, in 1551, when heresy assumed such a formidable political aspect in France, the civil power complained of the slowness of the ecclesiastical proceedings against it; and Henry II., fearing, as Daniel says, that he would not find in the ecclesiastical tribunals as much rigour and severity as he wished in an affair of this importance, gave cognizance of it to the parliament, and even to the presidents, whose judges, to the number of ten, decided upon all these causes without appeal. Now it is to the political and selfish policy of these rulers, that the adversaries of the Catholic religion are indebted for the acts and measures which supply them with such abundant matter for declamation, whenever they have occasion to excite the minds of the ignorant against it.

Catherine de Medicis, the prime mover of the massacre on the day of St. Bartholomew, was personally disposed to favour and adopt the Protestant opinions; and it was only as members of a political party that she wished to destroy those who employed them in opposition to the government. It was she who provoked the conference at Poissy, against the remonstrance of the bishops, who represented the danger of public disputations against faith; and she wrote to the pope on this occasion, stating that it was necessary to favour the Calvinists, and desiring him not to cut off from the communion of the Church

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. v. liv. 37.

those "who held fundamental points, and only doubted of things indifferent;" such, she added, as the use of images, which she herself considered to be forbidden in Scripture; — certain ceremonies at baptism — the confining communion to one kind; and she conceived "that the giving both species was more conformable to Scripture" than what had been decided by the councils. She desired, also, that the fête of Corpus Christi and the processions might be suppressed, that the divine service should be in the vulgar tongue, and that all masses should be abolished at which the priest alone communicated. Could the Church be answerable for such a person?

It was the current error of the day, broached by the pseudo-reformers—it was a diabolic superstition combined with it—not Rome, and her holy and merciful influence, which formed the mind of Catherine; and as for those who worked in the massacre, L'Estoil says, "Not one of these bravos believed in a God*."

However, there is no need to exaggerate horrors. It appears that the story of the king's couriers to the provinces, to extend the massacre, is a fabrication, as is consequently the reply of the Viscount d'Ortez, governor of Bayonne†. Rome heard of the massacre only in these words from the king: "that he had just succeeded in defeating a horrible conspiracy which had threatened his life, and that of all his family;" which was an intelligence that could have surprised no one, since Pius V. had written long before to warn him that a revolt was preparing, that troops were raising for the purpose in Germany, and that the Queen of England had promised to send both money and soldiers. No measures, however, had been taken to prepare against the danger; and, in consequence, the whole kingdom was filled with blood and desolation. When the king's messengers arrived, therefore, leaving the true event enveloped in mystery, it was but just that public rejoicings, as a measure of political courtesy in a friendly state—to say nothing of any natural and laudable sympathy—should be ordered in consequence. Nor did the evil terminate in this perversion of rulers and statesmen; for the policy of making religion a mere instrument of ambition, while

* Vide S. Victor, Tableau de Paris, tom. iii. 74. † Id. 196.

heresy as an opinion was in reality favoured, soon found partisans among the noble and great families of Europe, not even the Montmorencies forming an exception. Nevertheless, it would be great injustice not to remark a distinction between the maxims and conduct of civil government in the middle ages, before the rise of the Machiavellian principles and those of later times, subsequent to their general diffusion. The zeal of religious princes in ages of faith, and the love they bore their people, may have required refinement where spirits are made pure; yet were they free, at least, from all base mixture of personal or political interest. The Emperor Rupert, on being elected king of the Romans, visiting the different cities of the empire, came to Spires, and a number of proscribed persons with him, according to the custom of Germany, which permitted banished men to enter the cities from which they had been expelled, as part of his train; on which occasion the emperor used to hear their different cases, and decide upon them. At this time a citizen of high condition was welcomed by the principal men and a crowd of relations, who greatly desired his return; but when the emperor heard that he had been banished for blaspheming God, he gave judgment that he, on the contrary, should remain in exile while all the others received full pardon *. This was certainly the spirit of heroic rulers in the middle ages, when the cords to punish sinners were drawn by Charity's correcting hand.

It is quite a modern discovery, due to the new principles of civilization, that a country may justly be invaded by other states, and its king forcibly dethroned by them, to vindicate some wretch who had been punished according to law for an infamous outrage, too atrocious to be described, for which he would have been, even in these other states perhaps, torn in pieces on the spot by the people, had he offended before them in a similar manner. Portugal has therefore, in our times, experienced a fate unprecedented in the annals of the world, and which in no former age men could have conceived to be among the accidents of human things.

Plato decreed that for sacrilege men should be burnt on the forehead and hands, scourged, and banished from

* Drexelius de Vitiis Linguæ, cap. vi.

the state; and certainly the Christian Church could not have been furnished with a satisfactory reply to such rulers as wished to preserve the minds of their people from being corrupted, and the safety of human life undermined by an outrage against religion, and who should have been told by her that no open and prodigious violation of the reverence due to God ought to be visited with chastisement from those who were expressly styled in Scripture the ministers of God, bearing not the sword in vain.

Modern poets might have been spared much painful excitement, if some charitable instructor had informed them that they were totally in error as to the grounds on which such penalties were awarded. Alanus de Insulis remarks that for sacrilege men are punished temporally, not as having sinned against God, but as having sinned against men, for the correction and warning of others *.

The old poet of the Gentiles said, "The evil, because they hate the good, are evil; and the good, because they hate the evil, are good: therefore those who always hated the evil must be good †." This was not exactly the conclusion that Christian philosophy would permit men to draw; nor were the premises expressed in conformity with the Catholic distinction already remarked; according to which, as St. Augustin and St. Thomas say, men were to hate the sin and love the sinner. But certainly the converse of this maxim would never have been admitted in the ages of mercy and faith,—that the good, because they are indifferent to evil, and permit men to propagate evil among those who had been before good, were good; and that, therefore, those princes were good and truly merciful who had always shown indifference, or perhaps favour, to the evil.

The rule was for all men, without admitting of any dispensation for princes. Qui non est mecum, contra me est: et qui non colligit mecum, dispergit. How could any system, resembling what is now so falsely termed liberal, be advocated by men who believed that the above sentence had been pronounced by the mouth of God? It was not merely the judgment of rulers, it was the conviction of the people, that Catholic princes were

* Alani de Insulis contra Waldenses, c. 22.
† Plautus, Pseudol. Prolog.

bound, as St. Augustin shows, to take measures to protect the faithful from the infection of heretics *, and to repress such evil, excepting when a greater danger would attend these measures than that which they were designed to obviate †. The abbot Eanulf, contemporary of St. Boniface, writing to Charles, king of the Franks, expressly reasons on this principle, and says, that it is for this end the omnipotent God raises up good rulers, that prelates, by their assistance, may be enabled to exercise their functions, which is now manifest, he adds, "in the nation of the Francs, over whom your glory is made to preside, that by the goods entrusted to you, the subjects of your nation may attain to eternal benefits. Therefore, O glorious king, be solicitous to exercise well that grace which has been given to you from above: hasten to extend the Christian faith in the people subject to you, that the temples of the heathens may be overthrown, and that your example and power may have influence to assist the conversion of men, that you may obtain a recompence in heaven from Him, whose name and honour you have sought to magnify among the nations of the earth ‡."

The Church herself was bound to act with justice and prudence, as well as mercy. "Times, and the different state of seasons, are to be weighed, which change the merit of causes," says Petrus Cellensis; "for in the primitive Church, patience alone was to find place, which was to give the cloak also to him that would take away the tunic; for it was one without the Church who persecuted, and it was one within who suffered; but now that the Church is adult, it is not lawful for her sons to do what her enemies may have done lawfully. For it becomes a mother to correct her son, as it becomes a pupil to endure an adversary §. Of the toleration which springs from indifference to religion, and which is found quite compatible with an odious and insidious persecution, Manes was the first author, as may be seen in St. Epiphanius ||. Calculating all the advantages which can possibly be ascribed to such a system, one finds much

* Tract. xi. in Joan.
† Joan. Devoti Instit. Canon. lib. iv. tit. vi.
‡ S. Bonifac. Epist. lxxxii.
§ Petri Cellens. Epist. lib. i. 10.
|| Hæres. Sæcul. iii. n 66.

greater danger and evil to the people with whom it exists, than would result from a religious tolerance, which endeavours to repress scandals that tend to undermine all religion, and all virtue among mankind; for so far, at least, the maxims of Æschylus may be admitted. It is good to make men respect the good by fear.

Ξυμφέρει
σωφρονεῖν ὑπὸ στένει *.

"I will utter a short sentence," says that wise poet:—"Insolence is the true child of impiety; but from the health of minds proceeds happiness, which is dear to all †. Do not, therefore, expel all severity of punishment from the city; for what mortal, who fears nothing, will be just?" Alas! with what certainty might we add, or what mortal, who fears nothing, will suffer others to serve God in justice and peace?

καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν
τίς γὰρ δεδοικὼς μηδὲν ἔνδικος βροτῶν ‡;

The crusades, and the religious orders of knighthood which conducted them, have been represented by many modern historians as furnishing evidence of the intolerance of the middle ages; and the inconsistency of propagating religion by the sword has been clearly and eloquently shown; though, had these writers spent more time in consulting the original sources, they would never have supposed that there was anything in their argument to which the men of former ages would not have given a cordial assent. Every intelligent person, at the present day, is aware, that the writers of the last century took a false view of these events, and that the wars against the Mahometans in Palestine, in Spain, and in the south of France, were justifiable on the principle of self-defence, which was always that on which they received sanction. It is on this ground alone, that St. Bernard justifies them in his epistle to the clergy and people of the eastern parts of France. "As we must be content to wait," he says, "for the salvation of the Jews, so should we also endure the Gentiles, and not go forth to attack them with arms;

* Eumenid. 520. † Id. 534. ‡ Id. 698.

but now, since they begin to be violent against us, it is fitting that those who bear not the sword in vain should, by force, repel force *." That Christians may sometimes strike with the sword, appears to him proved by our Lord's answer to the soldiers; and then he asks, on what occasion can it be more lawful than in defence of Sion, and of the just generation guarding truth, that the nations which desire war may be dispersed, and those who disturb the city of God cut off, in fulfilment of that ancient promise, "Ponam te in superbiam sæculorum;" and "in Jerusalem consolabimini," provided the literal sense be not permitted to impair the spiritual, or make men forget that celestial city, of which the earthly Sion is but the figure †? All the zealous advocates who wrote to instigate the chivalry of Europe to engage in the crusade, were evidently under the impression that Christendom was exposed to imminent danger of being overrun by infidels, and of seeing the cross superseded by the symbol of the false prophet. Was it imaginary terror, when, even in Italy, cities had fallen into their hands? The monk Nicholas, from whose work, entitled "The Great Voyage to Jerusalem," I have so often had occasion to cite passages, when calling upon the Christians of the West to bear assistance against the persecutors of Christ, had this idea uppermost in his mind, which might be urged in his excuse for many violent and unguarded expressions; yet, even amidst all this intemperance, he concludes with these words:—"Certain it is, that we ought not to slay them; but since they are incessantly devising means to massacre and destroy us, it is better to attack them; for one ought not to permit the rod of the wicked to reign over the good, since that would be only to arm the hands of iniquity against the just ‡. "How," asks Innocent III., "can any man, according to the divine precept, love his neighbour as himself, who knows that his brethren, in faith and name Christians, are confined in the direful dungeons of the perfidious Saracens, and bowed under the yoke of most grievous slavery, and yet does not make efforts to deliver them, going farther than the precept of the natural law, and, as the Lord commandeth, doing to others what they wish others

* Epist. ccclxiii. † Exhort. ad Milit. Templi, c. 3.
‡ Le Grand Voyage à Hierusalem, f. cx.

should do to them? Are you not aware, that with them there are many thousand Christians in servitude and prisons, who are crucified with innumerable torments* ?" Do not these considerations furnish a satisfactory explanation, to account for that trunk of the holy land placed in every Church of Christendom, by order of Innocent, of which the bishop, the rector, and a devout layman, had each a key? Do they not explain why the holy mass was solemnly sung once every week with that intention; why, at every mass, the prayer was said of Deus venerunt gentes†; and why, every month, there was a general procession of men and women, in humility of mind and body, with devout prayer, imploring the mercy of Almighty God‡? And is it reasonable to charge the chivalry of Europe with being intolerant and cruel, because it responded to this voice? Must we exclude from the fellowship of the blessed merciful Geoffroy de Villehardouin, the Marechal of Champagne, and his five noble companions, because having been deputed to repair to Venice, to implore ships to convey the crusaders to Palestine, at the direction of the doge Dandolo, they, on presenting themselves, fell upon their knees before the assembled people, declaring, that they would not rise till the republic had consented to take pity upon the holy land? Did such fervour indicate cruelty? Or is it by bringing a general charge of intolerance against the middle ages, that one can explain this great movement of the people? Pope Innocent III. wrote to the sultan of Damascus and Babylon, and wishing to imitate him who says of himself, "Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde," humbly besought his greatness that, by his violent detention of Jerusalem, no more human blood might be shed than had already been shed, and following a sounder counsel that he would restore it to the Christians, considering, that from its detention, besides vain glory, more, perhaps, of difficulty than of utility results to him;" adding, "let afterwards the captives of both sides be delivered, and let us rest, in future, from all mutual offence, in such a manner, that the men of our race may not be in a worse condition with you, than those of yours are with

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xvi. c. 28.
† Gesta Inn. III. 84.
‡ Epist. Inn. III. lib. xvi. c. 28.

us *." In fact, the communications between that pontiff and the infidels who remained amidst the Christians, had been always of a most friendly nature. In his letter to the nobles, and other inhabitants of Sicily, denouncing the guilt of the tyrant Marconaldus, whose cause was espoused by the Saracens of the island, and exhorting them not to suffer the faithful to be oppressed by infidels, he adds these words, "for although we wish to love and favour the Saracens, and augment the good customs which regard them, if they remain loyal to the legitimate king, yet we do not wish, nor ought we to suffer, that they should effect the ruin of the kingdom along with Marconaldus †;" and in the letter which he addressed to all the Saracens in Sicily, he reminds them, that it is from the enemy of the holy see that they have reason to fear, saying, "for we wish you to consider, and hold for certain, that if his eye spareth not the Christians, whose priests he casteth into the sea, he will not spare the Saracens, against whom he will rage with so much the greater freedom, as he believes that he could do God service by shedding the blood of Pagans. We exhort you, therefore, to imitate the constancy of your ancestors, and not to be ungrateful for the benefits which you have received from the kings of Sicily; considering, also, the mildness of the apostolic see, which not only wishes to protect you in good customs, but also to increase its favour to you ‡." With respect to the men who took up arms in this cause, there has, in modern times, been a great diversity of opinion; but I believe that the ancient and contemporary writers knew them better than the authors of the present day. "O, what utility," exclaims Pope Innocent III., "hath already resulted from this cause! How many converted to penitence have engaged in the service of Christ, for the deliverance of the holy land, and, as if by the agony of martyrdom, have obtained a crown of glory, who, perhaps, would otherwise have persisted in their iniquities, tangled in the net of carnal pleasures, and worldly delights. This is the ancient artifice of Jesus Christ, which, for the salvation of his people, he hath been pleased to renew in these days §."

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xvi. 37.

† Inn. III. Epist. lib. ii. 221.

‡ Id. lib. ii. 226.

§ Epist. lib. xvi. 28.

Accordingly, amongst other secret and inscrutable causes of the invasion and detention of the eastern land, he says, "that the Lord, perhaps, in his mercy permitted it, from foreseeing that many leaving their parents and friends, and all that they had, following Christ under the banner of the cross, would be crowned with martyrdom in the defence of that land, so that the triumphant Church would receive joy and increase in heaven, whence the militant would seem to suffer grief and diminution on earth *." Assuredly, in innumerable instances, it was the charity of Christ which urged the steps of the Red Cross Knight and Pilgrim to the holy land. He was a devoted man, whose armour conscience buckled on; whom charity and compassion brought to the field as God's own soldier. The Italian poet represents Godfroy, of Bouillon, as expressing the sentiments which really did animate these Paladins, when he declares, that the deliverance of the Christians was the sole object of his enterprise.—

"But not for this our homes we first forsook,
And from our native soil have march'd so far,
Nor us to dangerous seas have we betook,
Expos'd to hazard of so far-sought war,
Of glory vain to gain an idle smook,
And lands possess'd, that wild and barbarous are :
That for our conquests were too mean a prey
To shed our blood, to work our soul's decay.
But this the scope was of our former thought,
Of Sion's fort to scale the noble wall,
The Christian folk from bondage to have brought,
Wherein, alas! they long have lived thrall :
In Palestine, an empire to have wrought,
Where holiness might reign perpetual,
And none be left, that pilgrims might denay
To see Christ's tomb, and promis'd vows to pay †."

The wars of the Spaniards, also, against the Moors, under the sanction of the Church, have been especially condemned by modern political and moral writers, as indicating cruelty and intolerance; though it will be hard for any dispassionate historian, after an investigation of the facts, to sanction such a sentence: for, in the first place, as in the case of the other crusades, it was a war

* Inn. III. Epist. lib. ii. 211. † Book i. 22.

in self-defence; in which, not alone Spain, but the whole of Christendom was interested. Pope Innocent III., in his letter to the archbishops of Toledo and Compostello, charging them to make peace between the kings of Spain, in order that they may render each other a mutual assistance against the Saracens, adds these words, "who not only aspire to the destruction of Spain, but threaten also to exercise their cruelty in other countries of the faithful of Christ, and, what heaven avert, to oppress the Christian name *." How grateful to this illustrious pontiff must have been the noble and affecting letter of Alphonso, king of Castille, some time afterwards, relating the great victory of the Navas de Toloso; in which he says, there was nothing to lament, but the small number of martyrs who, from such an army, passed to Christ †. The war was necessary. It was waged by men, whose whole trust was in the mercy of that God who they well knew would bless none but the merciful, and who advanced to battle, having the figure of the Lord's cross preceding them, and on their banner wrought the image of the blessed Virgin and her Child; that, beholding the ignominy suffered by the image of that Mother, which was pierced with stones and arrows, they might resolve to die with constancy for the faith of Christ ‡. King James I. of Aragon, on death-bed laid, spoke to his son Peter as follows:—"Be sure always to bear three things in mind; in the first place, to fear God with all your soul, and to commit yourself wholly to Him;—secondly, to preserve your people in concord and duty;—thirdly, to keep peace and fraternal union with your brother James." Then, going on to speak of the wars against the Moors, he advised him to expel them from his dominions by force of arms, because they were the perpetual and intestine enemies of the Christians, so that they never could be prevailed upon to remain at peace with Christians, and never could be moved, either by prayers or humanity, to be faithful to Christ §.

"Those who hate all wars," says an ancient Spanish historian, "should yet consider that there were near causes which did not suffer the Spanish people to remain

* Epist. Inn. III. lib. xv. 15. † Roder. Tolet. lib. vii. c. 12.
‡ Roder. Tolet. lib. vii. c. 10.
§ Bernardini Gomesii, lib. xx.

inactive any longer; for, in the first place, by external nations we used to be reproached that we had not only enemies constantly in our sight before our eyes, but that we could hardly support their repeated and unprovoked injuries. For who is so remote or ignorant of our affairs as not to know what a depopulation of our lands, what a carrying away of our flocks and herds, with their pastors, what attacks upon our villages and castles, were practised by these most cruel enemies? Moreover, every day they grew stronger, and threatened more stoutly, so that it seemed as if at last we were not to have any share in Spanish things. At length, what rendered this war unavoidable, Hali Abenhazan, King of the Moors, hearing that we were greatly occupied with other matters, and finding that the castle of Zaharam was more negligently guarded, took occasion to surprise it by night, killing the commander and his men against all law and justice and treaty, leading away in triumph men, women, and children, with flocks and herds. Who, then, can blame the Spanish Princes for resolving to make war against the Moors of Granada*?" Let it be imagined that a tribe differing in race, religion, laws, government, and manners, had been introduced by force into any of these nations of the North, which now boast of having views more enlightened, tolerant, and merciful, than those old Spanish kings: can any one doubt, excepting on the ground of a total loss of national energy, whether, under the continued pressure of the original violence, they would consider it fitting to endeavour to drive them from their soil? Why, then, are we to condemn the Catholic Spaniards for vindicating their country; or does the mere fact, that they beheld the Church and the Christian faith trampled upon, and exposed to daily perils and outrages, suffice to render their patriotism nothing but cruelty and religious intolerance? Deep and holy indeed were the emotions inspired by the deliverance of their ancient cities from what the writers of the middle ages term "the detestable folly of the Sarrazin;" and full of noble inspiration were the heroic deeds which, in connection with that protracted struggle, were enshrined in all their hearts. On one of the pillars of the cathedral of Cordova, of dark grey jasper, is a

* Œlii Antoni Nebrissensis, Rerum Hispanarum Historici, Decad. II. lib. i. c. 1.

arge rude cross, called "la cruz del cantivo," and held in great reverence. "A captive Christian," says the legend, "was by the Moors chained to this pillar, and forced to behold the horrors of their superstition, and the mockery of the holy faith; but he scratched with his nails the cross on the hard stone, as if taking possession of the temple of the false prophet, in the name of the holy Saviour. Shortly afterwards the prisoner would have received the crown of martyrdom; but that, in a few days, King St. Ferdinand took the city, which had been the seat of the Moorish empire since the year 718, and changed the mosque of the unbelievers into the cathedral of the new bishopric of Cordova. On this memorable day the angels of mercy were amidst the conquering army, to moderate the ardour of the soldiers, to protect the women, to preach the Gospel to the Moorish prisoners, and to break the chains of the Christian captives. These were the works to which St. Peter Gonçalez then devoted himself*. Let it be remembered, at the same time, with what benignity and mercy the Catholic society of Spain had always treated individually the Moors; how it respected their learned men, loved their minstrels, and received with honour and liberality the ambassadors of their kings. The Arabic knights were received without distinction, on the ground of their infidelity, at the courts of the Christian princes of Spain and Sicily. The Arabic philosophers were entertained in the palaces of many Christian kings. Edrissi lived at the court of the Norman Roger, and the sons of Averroës at that of Frederick Barbarossa. Sometimes even we find them in offices of honour, in the same manner as in earlier ages, when Macrobius, though a Pagan, held a high official dignity under the Christian emperor Theodosius the younger.

The institution of the Teutonic Knights is another subject of offence to the same description of observers; and yet, if we study their history, we shall find not only that the original object of their establishment was simply the protection of the Christians from the Pagans of the North, who were in habits of making the most ferocious inroads on the newly converted nations; but also that their conduct towards the nations whom they subdued was in conformity with the tenderest mercy and tolera-

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. i.

tion; so that peace and charity, and all offices of love, soon succeeded to the storm of war, whenever they had been obliged to have recourse to it. The plan was first formed by Bishop Albert, in the year 1199, of founding an order of Christian Knights, to protect the infant Church in Prussia from the repeated invasions of the heathens of the North, and it was approved of by Pope Innocent III *. If we are afflicted at hearing of Henry of Poland, and blessed Ambrose of Sienna, preaching a crusade against the Pagans of those regions, we should remember that these barbarians were continually falling upon the Christian communities, burning the towns, and putting all to the sword who were unable to resist them †.

Pope Innocent III. in his Epistle to all the faithful of Christ in Saxony and Westphalia, makes known to them the numerous conversions made by the bishop of Livonia in that region, and relates how the enemy of man, through envy, has raised a persecution of the Pagans against these new Christians, and inspired the worshippers of brutes, and trees, and waters, and unclean spirits, with a resolution to destroy them from the earth, and abolish the memory of the Christian name. Lest, therefore, it should be imputed to his negligence, if those who already believe should be compelled to go back, or those who desire to embrace our faith should be discouraged and prevented from doing so, the Pontiff admonishes and exhorts them to take measures for obliging the Pagans, who surround the Livonian Church, to make a treaty, and to observe it, and promises the protection of St. Peter to all who repair thither, to defend the Christians in the name of God ‡. Nor was the evil confined to that infant Church. Against the formidable incursions of the Tartars from the North, the Teutonic Knights furnished a most important assistance to Europe; and the Pope, in a bull, soliciting aid for them, says, that they are frequently in want of the necessaries of life, while under a continued expectation of martyrdom §.

The Sovereign Pontiffs, Alexander IV. and Urban IV., not content with ordering fasts and processions, raised

* Voight Geschichte Preussens, i. 6.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 3.

‡ Epist. Inn. III. liv. ii. 191. § Voight, iii. 151.

their voice to warn the princes and people of Christendom of the necessity of resisting these formidable hordes, whose vast projects and rapid conquests seemed to threaten the whole Christian world. Certainly, before men condemn the institution and conduct of the Teutonic Knights, they should consider what was the situation of the Christian society in the North. No pen could describe the barbarous rage of the Pagans, who used to lay waste and burn the lands and towns of the Christians with an insatiable fury. "The Lithuanians," says the old historian, "according to their error, proposed to sacrifice a Christian to their gods. The lot fell upon the commander Marguard Von Raschan. They bound him to his horse, while still bleeding from his wounds, and then committed both to the flames *." So convinced indeed at the time were all European nations of the real character of this warfare, that nobles and princes from the most distant countries, Scotland, England, and France, used to repair to Prussia, to assist the Teutonic Order. "The table of honour" was then instituted, to entertain them before setting out on an expedition, as also after its termination. In 1390, Henry Count of Derby, the Duke John of Lancaster's eldest son, who afterwards succeeded to the crown of England as Henry IV. came to Dantzig with 300 attendants. Out of France, on the same occasion, came the renowned knight Boucicaut, whose tragic fate furnishes so memorable a page in history †.

With respect to the internal administration, one cannot read the admonitions addressed to these rulers by Pope Innocent III. without feeling convinced that its general character was mercy and liberality. That Pontiff reminds the dukes and nobles of Poland and Pomerania, that although, as the Apostle saith, "it is impossible without faith to please God, yet that faith alone is not sufficient for that end, but that charity, above all, is necessary; without which, faith will profit nothing." He remarks to them, that as this is to be exercised towards all men, and extended also to enemies, so towards those who have been lately drawn from the error of the Gentiles to the knowledge of truth, it should be exercised with so much the more fervour, as they might be more easily inclined to look back, if treated with inhumanity. Reports have

* Voight Geschichte Preussens, v. † Id. v. 541.

reached the Pontiff of deeds which seem to proclaim that they require to be reminded of this truth. Therefore he beseeches and exhorts them in the Lord, and commands them by apostolic rescript, in the name of Him who came to save what was lost, and to give his soul a ransom for many, not to oppress the children of this new plantation, but to act towards them with so much the more clemency, as the weak might be in danger of falling back to their former conversation, since old bottles can scarcely contain new wine. And he gives charge to the Archbishop of Gnesne to cherish this people benignantly, for the sake of God; to defend them from all molestation and burdens, and to restrain their oppressors by ecclesiastical censure *." Again, at the suggestion of the Abbot Nicholas, and several bishops, he writes to the soldiers of Christ in Livonia, warning them against throwing an impediment in the way of these apostolic men, by seeking to increase their possessions, rather than to defend the faithful; reminding them, that the kingdom of God is not lands and towns, but peace and justice and joy in the Holy Ghost; and declaring that they shall be deprived of all privileges granted by the apostolic authority, if any clamour against them, arising from their cupidity, should ever again rise to the Holy See †.

After a review, however, of the conduct of this renowned order, from the commencement, towards the people with whom they were confronted, the impartial historian arrives at the conclusion that no charge of intolerance can be substantiated generally against them. "Not with the sword alone," says the historian of Prussia, "but also with the cross of Christ, the emblems of Christian charity and redemption, of Christian pity and tenderness, with the holy symbols of faith and the love of Christ, was the order introduced into the land; and the sublime end of those emblems and these duties was never forgotten, or suffered to perish in the minds of the brethren of the order." Not as lords, but as fathers and brothers, as an old chronicle declares, did they show themselves to the poor, and to the higher classes, inviting the new Christians to hospitality, taking part in their entertainments, receiving with compassion poor and sick

* Epist. tom. iii. liv. xv. 148.

† Epist. Inn. III. lib. xvi. 126.

Prussians into their hospitals, taking care of the widows and orphans, whose husbands and fathers had fallen in the wars, and sending boys and young men of talent to be educated in Germany, especially to the school of Magdeburg, to qualify them to be Christian teachers on their return *. What but mercy, in its most exalted sense, could have induced the inhabitants of these exposed frontiers, at times of imminent peril, when they were witnessing the slaughter of so many of their helpless fellow Christians, to suffer as many of their prisoners as expressed a desire for instruction, to be received into the houses of the religious? In 1241, the Tartars, on their advance to Breslau, had put to the edge of the sword all whom they met, sparing neither women nor children, not even the sick or the dying; yet we read, in the annals of the monastery of St. Adalbert, that when the city of Breslau was miraculously delivered from falling into their hands, by the prayers of St. Ceslas, that holy man received into his order a great number of the prisoners, who evinced a desire to abandon idolatry and to be instructed in the mysteries of the Christian faith. At all times the Teutonic Knights, according to the testimony of the old historian, treated the converted Prussians with the utmost mercy and kindness. Nothing was changed that could be tolerated in a Christian community. The noble was respected as noble, and the ignoble protected in all his privileges, and every thing conducted according to the ancient custom. It is true, if any ignoble person proved himself singularly faithful and useful to the brethren, him they ennobled and exalted; while, on the other hand, eminent acts of malice caused the unfaithful to forfeit their nobility; so that many, born of rustic parents, became possessed of privileges and liberties, their posterity ranking with nobility; while conversely, as Duburg says, many neophites in Prussia, whose ancestors were noble, came to be esteemed ignoble, on account of the malice which those ancestors had evinced against the faith and people of Christ. But Voight concludes, from a general review of the whole state and territorial administration of Prussia by the Teutonic Knights, that the people were governed under them in a much milder and more tolerant manner than is generally at present sup-

* Ib. 293. Voight Geschichte Preussens, ii. 291.

posed *. If we recur to more distant times, and examine the wars against the Saxons, we shall be constrained to arrive at the conclusion of Guizot, who admits, that in pursuing those savage enemies, Charlemagne only obeyed the great necessity of repressing the constant invasion of the barbarians. Still, undoubtedly, instances there were of intolerance in this society of fervent and heroic men. Bigotry, alas, is a besetting sin of our nature, and too often it has been the attendant of religious zeal; but, as a great English philosopher remarks, in a recent work, "it is perhaps most bitter and unsparing when found with the irreligious;" to which truth the history of modern times gives one concurrent testimony. Fearful and strange was the mixture of intolerance and generosity in that act of Roger, king of Sicily, delivering to death Philip his chamberlain, when he discovered that he had been a disguised Sarassin; and the manner in which Romuald of Salerno relates it, perhaps does him but little honour †. Examples of cruel zeal did no doubt occur in the conduct of those chivalrous orders, instituted for the defence of the Christians; as in the case of Hermann Von Altenburg, of the Teutonic order, when he heard of the inhabitants of one Prussian village returning to their idolatry. But what I assert, and what I hope to have proved, is, that in all these instances, there was a contradiction to the concurrent voice of the whole Church in every age, which taught that, not by such sacrifices, but by mercy, God could be glorified.

If, now, we turn upon those who so vehemently accuse the ages of faith, and demand with what consistency they can charge them with intolerance, and whether the revolution in religion, involving both doctrine and manners, which they effected, introduced a spirit of greater mercy and forbearance into the government of states, and the conduct of men in private relations of life,—will they find it easy to give a satisfactory reply? Reader, if thou art one of those early friends who followed my steps through the land of old romance and chivalry, thou wilt not need instruction here, nor deem it strange that I should say little now in justification of our heroic forefathers, for regarding with horror those

* Geschichte Preussens, iii. 458.
† Rerum Italic. Script. tom. vii.

who espoused this direful cause, the source of shame and sorrow to so large a portion of the human race.

"It is a common opinion," says a French historian, "that in the middle ages the heretics alone were persecuted. This is an error. The Albigenses of Languedoc, the Illuminati of Flanders, the Vaudois of the Alps, the Protestants of La Rochelle and the Avennes, in no instance evinced the gentleness of the first martyrs. Theirs was a warlike spirit, which prompted them to combat without scruple, and to win glory like the heroes of the world—by deeds of arms." Had our charitable and most wise senators, who have lately all of a sudden become conversant with sums of theology, in order to accuse Catholic prelates of intolerance, been pleased to examine the date when these works were originally published, and had they taken a glance at the achievements of their own party, in reference to which some chapters of those works were written, they would perhaps have thought it quite as well to replace the work of poor Peter Dens upon the shelf, even though they were never again to win the fame, among journalists, of scholastic erudition.

Truly it is somewhat over-bold for any followers of the new religion to boast of having taught and practised toleration, and to charge with massacres and revocation of edicts of mercy the ancient Catholic society. It is true they made common cause with all who resisted the authority of Peter's chair: 'tis true, even so early as in the time of Zuingle, there were many of them heard to express their conviction that the great heroes of the Pagan world were in as favourable a position with respect to salvation, as any men in times subsequent to the gospel: 'tis true, also, that at the present day some of their most popular authors speak of "the deep and fervent devotion and greatness of mind of Saladin the Turk, and say that, among the European warriors or monarchs of his age, no one appears to have so great a claim to our respect as he." But what avails their claim, founded on such abstract views, which only prove how completely they have lost all trace of the manners and sentiment of the first Christians, when we observe the line of conduct, and even the policy, coolly and premeditately acted upon for nearly three centuries, which they adopted in every part of the earth where power was given to them,

towards the immense multitude of their fellow-creatures who remained firm in their attachment to the Catholic Church and to the holy see of Rome?

Who could count the number of massacres exercised by the Calvinists in France during the twelve years' war of which they were the authors? Wherever they were the strongest, they ravaged the country, burnt or demolished the churches, plundered them, and committed the most horrible profanations, massacred the priests and monks who refused to apostatize, put whole multitudes of simple people to the edge of the sword, violated even the graves, and twice attempted to seize the persons of two kings. So terrible were the deeds of these men, whose feet were swift to shed blood, that other nations thought they could discern in them the arm of Almighty Providence taking vengeance upon the French for the massacres and destruction committed in Calabria by the Turks, when in alliance with Francis I., their king*.

"What did they desire?" asks St. Victor, in a sudden transport of most just indignation;—"what did they pretend? Where was their mission? where was their authority? where were their miracles, to preach a new gospel and impose a new religion upon twenty millions of men who wished to preserve their own?"

"As for the proceedings on both sides," says De Bourgueville, in his Researches on the Antiquities of Normandy, "the Lord God will be a just judge of every thing; but there is a great difference between these cruel and inhuman murders, committed by private authority, without any formality, and those sentences enacted after hearing of the cause against the disturbers of the public repose; for the poor priests and monks whom the Protestants massacred so cruelly, had not condemned those who had been executed in pursuance of a judicial sentence, but had assisted and consoled them with great compassion, praying God for them†."

What was the tolerance of their English brethren? Look at the system which they founded by parliamentary acts, and propagated by arbitrary power. Where, then, were the civil and religious liberties of the people?—and

* Gabriel Barrii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriæ, lib. iii. in Thesaur. Antiq. Italiæ, ix.

† Les Recherches et Antiquités de Normandie, 181.

where was liberty of conscience, and that freedom of private judgment so falsely proclaimed by the reformers, when some dozen of individuals could cast the chain of bondage over the national mind, and rivet its links by such penalties * ? The truth is, tolerance was a spirit to which they never laid claim. They canonized persecution; they preached revenge.

"That is the most soldier-like sorrow," cries Fuller, "which in the midst of grief can give order for revenge on such as have slain their friends. Our general fast was first appointed to bemoan the massacre of our brethren in Ireland; but it is in vain to have a finger in the eye if we have not also a sword in the other hand. We must bend our bows in the camp, as our knees in the churches. Yea, the soldier at the same time may shoot out his prayer to God and aim his pistol at his enemy—the one better hitting the mark for the other †." The book containing these Thoughts has been lately reprinted in England, and, what is more remarkable, formally eulogised as likely to confer the greatest service, so that there can be no injustice in alleging it. "Its author," we are told in the Preface of this edition of 1830, "was a divine of the strictest sincerity and most fervent piety; and this work bears the strongest evidence that his mind rarely wandered from the sacred purport of his ministry." All his faults are censured, but there is no notice of the spirit which breathes in these passages. "Few," we are told, in conclusion, "will peruse these Thoughts without being convinced that they are calculated to strengthen the faith and increase the morality of the world, in all 'times' and in all ages."

Is it to Germany or Switzerland that we ought to look for evidence of the superior tolerance of the new system? Those cantons of the latter country, which had embraced the new opinions, as Zurich and Bern, would suffer no Catholics to remain. They sought to starve them out. "As for the common race of men," said Luther, "they ought to be pushed corporally and grossly to do their duty; so that, whether they will or not, they may be exteriorly pious under the law and under the sword,

* Quin's Letters to Molesworth.
† Thoughts, 139, 183.

as we keep wild beasts in cages and chains *." Was it in the decretals, or in the canons, or in the scholastic doctors, that he found this doctrine? "If I were in place of these seigneurs," he says elsewhere, "I would assemble the Jews, and challenge them to prove the justice of the epithets which they apply to Christ and St. Mary. If they could prove it, I would give them one hundred florins; if not, I would tear out their tongues †." Was it from any pope or doctor of the Roman Church that he learned such toleration?

Calmly and dispassionately throwing our eyes back upon these past events, the accusation of intolerance seems the most unreasonable of all those that have been adduced against the ages of faith. When a reform was required and begun, how differently was it conducted by those who adhered to their spirit and traditions, and by those who renounced them! The Catholic reform, as a French writer remarks, moved by gentle thoughts, by exhortations full of soul, songs of a ravishing sweetness, prayers bedewed with tears, tender and fraternal epistles, books penetrating with unction and peace,—such are the living witnesses which remain to us of that holy reform! Compare this with the Germanic reform—with insult on the tongue, and iron in the hand, burning the effigy of the pope, and massacreing its adversaries; professing, at the same time, to be actuated solely by the love of truth and the hope of enabling the people to judge for themselves; like Hierocles, the sophist, who, in procuring a massacre of the Christians, published a work against them, entitled, "Philalethes, or the Friend of Truth."

Hear the chief of the German reformers:—"Let them accuse me, if they choose, of being too violent; I care no more for it. I wish thenceforth that my glory and my honour should be in their saying how I rage and swell against the Papists. I have found these cunning men incorrigible. Well, then, since I cannot shake their infernal resolutions by goodness, I break with them. I will pursue them with my imprecations without end or rest, even till my death. They shall never again receive from me a good word. I wish that they may be buried to the sound of my thunder and lightning!"

* Michelet, Mem. de Luther, ii. 156.
† Ibid. ii.

Then, after a pause, "I can no longer pray without cursing. If I say, 'Hallowed be thy name!' I must add, 'Cursed be the name of the Papists!' If I say, 'Thy kingdom come,' I am to add, 'Cursed be the Popedom!' Thus I pray ardently every day, and with me all the true faithful of Christ *."

Well might such an apostle disdain the angel of the school, who taught that prayer is only meritorious when made in charity and inspired by charity †! What a contrast between him and that Spanish friar who prays for charity, while it is charity, and a charity already perfect, which forms his prayer! since it could only have been inspired by the secret operation of Him who gives zeal to his ministers, and infuses love divine into their hearts! What a contrast to that disciple who walked so faithfully in his steps, Peter of Verona! who carried abnegation so far that he chose to imitate the silence of Jesus Christ, and did not wish men to justify him. In the north, what do we behold? Hatred—that shapeless, fiendly thing of many names—cupidity, ambition, the vile passions of sense—a John Hund, secretary of the elector of Saxony, boasting that the nobles had plundered the monks—a spirit of bitter mockery leading to such deeds as Marlowe ascribes to his Jew of Malta, where he represents Ithamore saying of himself,

> "Once at Jerusalem, where the pilgrims kneel'd,
> I strew'd powder on the marble stones;
> And therewithal their knees would rankle so,
> That I have laugh'd agood to see the cripples
> Go limping home to Christendom on stilts;"

achievements imitated to the letter in France by Huguenots—encouraged, eulogised, by many a dark scribe, who with his iron pen dipped in scorn's fiery poison, has made his fame enduring. In the south, what is seen with Catholics the while? Disinterestedness, privation, the mortification of nature, the passionate love of suffering, the majestic sorrow of blessed mourners, the purest exaltation of the heart—a John of the Cross crying out, in the midst of the most excruciating pains, "Let us

* Michelet, Mem. de Luther, tom. iii. 27.
† S. Thom. 2, 2, Q. 83, a. 2 ad 3um.

take wing, let us rise, let us rise! What do we here, my brethren? Let us hence to life eternal!" In the north one beholds a rage that induces stupidity, excitement without grandeur, a complete absence of all generous views, no spiritual philosophy, but gross superstition: in the south, a sweetness, an evangelic patience, a serenity which nothing can trouble, a resigned confidence which the greatest obstacles cannot embitter; moreover, a prodigious elevation of views, a marvellous knowledge of the intimate wants of man, a profound understanding of our heart and of our nature, an exquisite poesy which seizes on the soul, which elevates, transports—ideas of order, of organization, of creation. On the one side is seen an active and prudent charity, a kind of softness and delicacy tempered by grandeur; on the other, an ingenious and merciless intolerance with a profession of liberty, an ardent and gross sensualism, the energetic corruption of barbarism, which extinguishes, in the fumes of intemperance and in the intoxication of pleasure, the celestial affections of the heart and the light of the understanding.

At the present day, the world itself renders to this truth an involuntary homage.

"Awake, awake, brave peers of England! Behold the formidable progress of Romanism in this enlightened land! Measure the walls that have been lately built at Hastings to enclose a hospice for the sisters of charity, and then say whether we exaggerate the danger." Such is now the cry of senators, re-echoed on all sides, to attest the propagation of faith in this country; for the world judges of the progress and force of Catholicism by the multiplication of its hospitals, of its colleges, of its churches and sanctuaries of retreat from the world, in a word, by what is seen of charity, study, patience, adoration, and beneficence. It estimates the vitality of Protestantism by the violence of its political measures, and the fury of its triumphant anniversaries to commemorate days of horror, days of weeping, days of blood.

"When Sanballat heard that we built a wall, he was very angry," saith the Scripture *; and Hugo of St. Victor remarks, in commenting upon these words, that this is the anger of heretics, of those who call themselves

* Esd. ii. 4.

Samaritans, that is, keepers of the law of God, when they are aliens from God and from his law, as from the house of David—that is, from the unity of Christ and his Church, by heresy and schism. These men are unwilling that the walls of the Church should be repaired, lest, the state of piety increasing, they should be obliged to depart from their impiety *.

It was quite sufficient ground, therefore, in their estimation, for exciting a general alarm, and for accusing Catholics of intolerance and tyranny, if they should hear of their building a wall and making an enclosure; but what would have been their discouragement if the only proof of their own ascendancy had been the opening of an asylum for the miserable? It was in something very different from the prayers of the poor that they put their trust. Men learned in the law, need not be reminded that almost the whole statute book of England is occupied with provisions to punish and check Papists, in other words, those whom Luther and Calvin, and their missionaries, had not persuaded to renounce the doctrine of the apostles, and to revolt against the authority of their successors: in comparison with which measures, the intolerance of the Mahometans was liberality itself; for in Don Julian's compromise with the Moors, the latter allowed the Christians to keep possession of their churches; and at Cordova they were also allowed to build new ones.

The persecuting spirit of the new societies had not even that poor plea to allege of disinterestedness, and of unmixed desire to save the people from destructive errors, which might have been urged by the civil power in Catholic times. Calvin was well known to have cherished a hatred against Servetus for twenty years before he brought him to the stake. With regard to severity of legislation against vices, certainly the progress was immense between the times when the opinion of St. Augustin prevailed, "that some evils ought to be tolerated by the magistrate, lest the whole world should be disturbed with lust;" and the age of Calvin's light, which beheld the rulers of Geneva causing a citizen to be beheaded, for having in his possession a portfolio of immoral prints. Or are we referred, for a mirror of toleration, to those

* Hugo S. Vict. Allegoriarum in lib. Esther, lib. ix. c. 13.

governments which have avowedly adopted the principle of religious indifference for the basis of their legislation? And are we to admit them to be eminently tolerant? Yes, when they have closed our seminaries, plundered and destroyed our monasteries, converted our ancient churches into municipal offices, pronounced it illegal to form a holy pacific procession in honour of the mysteries of our faith which teach love and charity to all the world; when, like Thierry, the Burgundian king, they execute an insidious plan against the religious men who cultivate the desert, interfering with the private discipline of their monasteries, on the plea of having protected them, and when passive resistance is offered, declaring that they are too wise to desire to make martyrs, but that they will have men subjects, and accordingly commanding them to depart from their territories, justifying their sentence with an hypocritical profession, and then sending a band of soldiers to drag the servants of God by force from the altar, and to escort them on their road towards the land from which they originally came,—when all this is done, they betray, we are told by a modern author, "no want either of tolerance, or of the good sense from which that virtue springs." On the contrary, they have the authority of Rousseau for affirming, that all these measures emanate from the purest principles of patriotism and political wisdom; for in his Social Contract, that luminary of their system has encircled its intolerance with a kind of glory, by saying, that magistrates may justly punish men for opinions, as rendering them "insociable;" a principle which is adopted by Paley, that father of the present Anglican philosophy. It is true, they have seized on all the treasures which the piety of former ages had appropriated to the relief and comfort of the poor: they have effaced all vestiges of the holy communities, which first cultivated the soil, abolished slavery, imparted the light of faith, preserved letters and arts, converted and civilized the inhabitants; but they have only done what was required to maintain uniformity and order. Their legal order reigns, like that of the conquerors described by Tacitus, "ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant."

Moreover, under both systems, whether the religious or the political, the odium of such measures attaches itself unavoidably to the chiefs and founders. Jeremy Taylor, in his liberty of prophesying, makes an excep-

tion in the case of Catholics; and Milton, when arguing to show that the magistrate should not use force in matters of religion, adds, "but as for popery, why it also may not hence plead to be tolerated, I have much less to say. This is not a religion, but a Roman principality; and the consciences of the Papists, by voluntary servitude to man's law, have forfeited their Christian liberty*:" when it is considered what was necessarily implied, then, by a denial of toleration, the force of such evidence will be understood. The doctors of Lambeth and of Oxford need not be cited, as no one is ignorant of what they required; whereas, in ages of faith, intolerance and persecution were the work of men, who, in general, were the disgrace and refuse, not the true representatives, or choice spirits of Catholicism. If any individuals of illustrious merit failed, in respect to mercy, they were always sure to be recalled, by authority, to a sense of their obligations, as we remarked in the case of Hincmar. Search our annals from the beginning. In vain will you hope to find any parallel for the scene in which the learned and the noble of a great nation,—men the most esteemed for piety, admired for their professions of toleration, and respected for the authority of their office,—are heard, with one voice, maintaining the justice of compelling, by force, a whole people to support an organized body of missionaries, who were to teach a new religion? Had Charlemagne such counsellors? Were such the notions of justice gathered in the school of Alcuin? When was it ever heard that the Catholic Church imposed tithes upon a people before they were converted? But it is beneath the dignity of learning to pursue the comparison. "Honour must be defended;" a man in authority is supposed, by Drexelius, to allege in defence of his harsh measures, "I hold a public station." "I beseech you," replies that learned Jesuit, "let us not be more subtle than is right. Stephen, and the apostles, and Christ, held a public station, and yet pardoned their most capital enemies†." Here was the model of Catholic tolerance; here was the spirit of all who had imbibed the spirit of the Church, and who might, with truth, be adduced as persons qualified to re-

* An Apology for Smectymnuus.

† Drexelii de Vitiis Linguæ, cap. lv.

present it: for of the philosopher, legislator, and statesman, in ages of faith, one might fearlessly say, in the words of the wise man, "His mouth was opened to wisdom, and the law of clemency was on his tongue." What page in their writings is not full of mildness and forbearance, of love and compassion, and the most tender expressions of a merciful and sympathising heart? I think, upon the whole, no dispassionate man, possessing any moderate degree of information, will venture to object to our arriving at the conclusion of a modern French critic, whose view of the literature of the middle ages cannot, at least, be accused of partiality in favour of Catholic times, and who, nevertheless, in speaking of them, says, "Reason had then its rights. It is not a boldness to be dated from yesterday in our modern Europe. The ideas of justice, and of tolerance, are not a creation of the philosophic spirit *."

CHAPTER VII.

From beatitude we have, in brief space, journeyed; but on the new way where now I venture, again are heard, in the faint distance, blissful sounds, and voices exclaiming, "Love ye those who have wronged you." O, reader, thou needest not to ask, What tongues are these? This course reveals the multitude which adored the Lamb that was slain, of which each one bore the image next his heart; for it was the custom at Rome, that, on the Sunday in Albis, which is the octave of Easter, figures of lambs in wax should be distributed by the archdeacon to the people in the Church, after the mass and communion, in order that the gentleness and meekness of the Saviour might never pass from their minds †; and these were quickly borne by devout pilgrims into all lands, with a zeal that oft awakened the jealousy of apostate states, which recognized and denounced them as the badge of enemies, though they could serve only to inculcate the

* Villemain, Tableau de la Litterature au Moyen Age, i. 308.
† Baron. Ann. 692.

patience which Tertullian calls the mother of mercy, the meek endurance, and heroic forgiveness of injuries, which had been practised by the merciful in ages of faith. Whether we consider the gracious and benign lessons in the ancient books inculcating that duty, or the beautiful examples of its fulfilment, with which the history of the middle ages abounds, it would be difficult to propose a more delightful path than that which now presents itself. The manner in which the duty of mercy towards an enemy is announced and enforced by the ancient writers is such, that a reader can hardly refrain from tears while he beholds the whole sum of wisdom abbreviated, as it were, in one word. "Nothing is more like God in nature," they remark, "than a man who is placable to his enemies; for God loved us while we were his enemies, and not only loved us but chose to die for us *." "We must endeavour," says the holy Cyprian, "to imitate the patience of God. Yes, brethren, the origin and greatness of patience must be traced from God himself; but O, how great is the patience of God! He endures patiently the temples of the profane men, who outrage his majesty; He endures idols and sacrilegious ceremonies; He makes his sun to shine upon the evil, and upon the good, and his rain to descend on the just, and on the unjust: He makes the elements serve all men alike, the impious as well as the good; the winds blow, the springs burst forth, the harvests swell in waves, the grapes ripen, the trees cover themselves with fruit, the forests put on thick foliage, the meadows adorn themselves with the enamel of flowers. God delays vengeance, and patiently waits, that man may correct himself, and return to his Saviour. Such is the patience of the Father, and similar to it was that of the Son; for all the actions of Jesus Christ were characterized by patience, and by that divine evenness of soul of which nothing could interrupt the tranquillity. Accordingly, we find in the Scriptures that the patriarchs and prophets and just men who prefigured Jesus Christ are principally distinguished by this patience and evenness of soul, always the same. Such was that of Abel, of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Joseph, of Moses, of David. Now, as patience is the good of Jesus Christ, impatience is the evil of the devil; and as

* Idiotæ Contemp. cap. 30.

patience belongs to him in whom Jesus Christ dwells, so he whose heart is open to the malice of the devil is the slave of impatience. Let us remount to the origin of the world. The devil could not endure that man should be created in the image of God; so the first man perishes, and causes the ruin of the human race. Adam, impatient to touch the forbidden fruit, finds death in his disobedience; Cain, before murdering his brother, could not endure his sacrifices and presents; Esau could not bear the least restraint upon his appetite; the Hebrew people could not endure the delay of Moses, and so lost God by their impatience. In the Church, also, it is impatience which makes heretics. Impatience raises up deadly hatreds, and makes people revolt, like the Jews, against the peace and charity of Jesus Christ *."

Now hear the devout contemplatist of the middle age: —"If," saith Louis of Blois, "when any difference hath given rise to bitterness between you and one of your brethren, you do not seek to be reconciled to him; if you do not forget the injury he has done to you, but, on the contrary, if you cherish a secret resentment or a less sincere affection for him, you are not a servant of Jesus Christ, you are not a Christian, you are abominable before God †."

Accordingly, when Pope Innocent III. commanded a general procession in Rome, on the fourth feria within the octave of Pentecost, for the peace of the universal Church, and especially for the deliverance of Spain from the hands of the Saracens, he desired that no one should be excluded from joining it but such persons as cherished enmity against others. "To this procession," saith he, "let all be moved to come; nec ab ea se quisquam excuset præter illos qui habent inimicitias capitales ‡."

These guides argue to demonstrate the unreasonableness of resentment. "What do you accuse," says Drexelius, "in the man who injures you?—his will or his power, or both? You say both, and yet I will teach you to accuse neither: not his will, for that, without the power, could not injure you; not his power, for that is from God, and what injury does He commit against you?

* S. Cyprian de Patientiâ.
† Louis de Blois, Guide Spirit. chap. i.
‡ Epist. Inn. III. lib. xv. 181.

God punishes your sins, exercises your patience, multiplies your rewards,—and this you say is to injure you! But you reply, the man is malevolent. You always will look to man; but I wish you to look up to God *."

"All men are your friends," said the seraphic father to his friars, "and no one is to be called an enemy; for they who are angry with you, and who persecute you, confer a greater benefit on your souls than any you could receive from the sweetest friend. All men, therefore, confer favours on you; and besides yourselves, you can have no enemy †."

This doctrine, in the middle ages, was not confined to the cells of friars; it reigned in the feudal tower, in the Tuscan villas, and in the palaces of Florence. "Qui accepit injuriam," says Marsilius Ficinus to John Cavalcanti, "non ab inferente sed a seipso accepit." It is the part even of a magnanimous man, through greatness, to take but little note of little things; and little and brief are all things temporal ‡.

The blessed Ælred, in his Mirror of Charity, thus explains the rule:—"Amicus qui non potest non diligi, diligatur in Deo: inimicus qui non propter se potest diligi, diligatur propter Deum; ille ex affectu, iste ex ratione §." This is taken for granted by St. Anselm, and therefore, in one of his profound works, the disciple asks, "Since Christians must have forgiven, why do they pray dimitte nobis debita nostra? Or if they have not forgiven, why do they pray?" To whom St. Anselm replies, "He who doth not forgive, saith in vain 'Dimitte;' but he who forgiveth may pray, because this itself belongs to his forgiveness, that he should pray for it ||."

Have you an enemy, or any one against whom you bear malice, and are you repairing to the church to give to the poor, to the clergy, to God? Hear what St. Augustin saith to you: "Leave your gift, leave the latar; go and be reconciled to your brother. God will not be angry because you defer to offer your gift: te quærit Deus magis quam munus tuum ¶."

* Drexelii De Conformit. Voluntatis Hum. cum Divina, lib. i. cap. 2.

† Sermon iv.

‡ Mars. Ficin. Epist. lib. i.

§ Ælred. Spec. Charitat. lib. iii. c. 26.

|| Cur. Deus Homo, lib. i. cap. 19.

¶ S. August. Serm. xvi. de Verb. Dom.

Finally, St. Bernardine of Sienna tries to call into the service of mercy the interested feelings of the heart. "A merchant," saith he, "acts advisedly, who sells his wares to the highest bidder. Now you will receive a greater reward by showing mercy to your enemy than to your friend *."

"In the Christian combat," says St. Chrysostom, "not the striker, as in the Olympic contest, but he who is struck, wins the crown. This is the law in the celestial theatre, where angels are the lookers-on †."

The action of these principles in the middle ages may be considered, in connexion with the manners of the religious, sublimely mild, and of persons engaged in the world, who may be supposed under the influence of the general spirit of society; and in both, the manner in which the virtue was exercised can hardly fail to strike every reader as furnishing additional evidence of the fact which we observed in the last book, that the Catholic morality involved graces wholly above nature in its fallen state, and of an origin superinduced, immediately divine. Stephen prayed for those who stoned him, "offering to God," adds St. Gregory Nazianzen, "something more than death, namely, moderation of mind and the love of his enemies." Even so: that renouncement of the corrupt nature inherited from Adam, with all its malevolent and revengeful appetites, which was implied in this most generous passion, was questionless something more than death, which men truly magnanimous at all times had been inclined to accept and to despise. For who but the Creator that had first made man could restore him to a conformity with the eternal image, all trace of which had been so nearly obliterated by disorders utterly incurable without the intervention of a Divine hand? When was it ever heard, in the ancient world, that not merely a few philosophers, but whole nations existed, with whom it was considered vile and infamous to take vengeance? As well might you have expected to find men capable of existing without the custom of food, as without this nourishment, which seemed essential even as daily bread to their very animal life. There were, it is true, some isolated sages who entertained a higher notion of what was just and right. "If any one

* S. Bernard. Senens. tom. iii.; de Beat. Serm. ix.
† In Epist. ad Rom.

should disappoint you," says Epictetus, "bear it, and do not say this man was not what I thought him; for this is plebeian, and of a man cast out to external things ἰδιωτικὸν γὰρ καὶ διαβεβλημένον πρὸς τὰ ἐκτός *. Quanto quis major, tanto placabilis iræ, was a celebrated line; but in general even the wisest and best of the philosophers either expressly sanctioned or tacitly acquiesced in the principle and practice of retaliation. Sophocles himself, and in his old age too, says, that to render evil for evil exposes no man to the anger of the gods.

Οὐδενὶ μοιριδία τίσις ἔρχεται,
ὧν προπάθῃ, τὸ τίνειν †.

You have the same doctrine delivered by the poetic moralist, who seems to aspire to the character of a philosopher even more than to that of a tragedian, and who ascribes the vindictive spirit to his most virtuous and interesting personages. When Eurystheus is brought in captive, Alcmene triumphs in the prospect of vengeance, and exhausts the power of words in expressing her hatred and her joy, exclaiming,

τί δῆ τόδ'; ἐχθροὺς τοῖσίδ' οὐ καλὸν κτανεῖν ‡.

The manners of the blessed meek and merciful appear to be condemned in advance by the Stagyrite, where he says, "Mildness seems to sin rather in the way of deficiency than of excess; for the mild person is not revengeful to punish, but rather compassionate to forgive §."

The idea of injury affording an occasion for the practice of virtue, never seems to have occurred to any mind. At the most, you could only hope to find a disposition like that ascribed by the Corinthians to the Lacedæmonians, who esteemed it, they said, the same thing, neither to injure others nor to be themselves injured ‖; and the Spartan Ephors are recorded to have actually punished a man for the singular reason that he was generally injured and insulted ¶. The principle of embracing all men, both friends and enemies, in one affection, and of showing generous courtesy to the latter, would probably have been condemned as repugnant to every idea of

* Epicteti Sentent. cap. 30.
† Œdip. Colon. 228.
‡ Eurip. Herac.
§ Aristot. Ethic. lib. iv. c. 5.
‖ Thucyd. lib. i. 17.
¶ Plutarch. Instit. Lac.

justice and honour. "Invite to your feast," says Hesiod, "him who lives nearest to you; invite your friend, but not your enemy." Achilles even says to Nestor, that he ought to participate in his hatred of Agamemnon, and not try to defend him:—

——— οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ
Τὸν φιλέειν, ἵνα μή μοι ἀπέχθηαι φιλέοντι·
Καλόν τοι σὺν ἐμοὶ τὸν κήδειν ὅς κ' ἐμὲ κήδῃ.

But it would be useless to trace this contrast at greater length. Let us at once turn to the sources of historical information respecting Catholic manners in the ages of faith, and proceed to illustrate their attribute of mercy in the order which I have already proposed.

When Herod had beheaded John the Baptist, what revenge did his disciples take? "See how they behave themselves," says a modern writer; "'and his disciples came and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.' And was this all? And what was all this?" The forbearance of the Baptist's disciples, and the prayer of Stephen, can not only be paralleled in the history of the middle ages, but it is clear that it was strictly by them as living examples to all times that the minds of men were directed, and, as it were, tuned to action, when occasions permitted the exercise of corresponding deeds.

St. Peter of Verona, having had the courage to preach to the Manichæans, was doomed by them to die, and slain by an assassin as he passed through a wood on the road between Como and Milan. After receiving the blow of the hatchet, the blessed martyr was trying to write on the ground with his blood the first words of the Credo, when the murderer finished his work with a poignard. This wretch, Carin, was arrested and conducted to the prison of the podesta, whence he soon escaped, and fled to Forli, near the Apennines, where he remained until remorse induced him to come forward and place himself in the hands of a Dominican friar. What revenge did he take? See how the order acted: "and the friar heard his abjuration, and then procured him the habit of a lay brother; the duties of which office he continued to discharge, in a spirit of penance, for many years, till his death †." Could any thing be more conformable to what was taught from the Mount?

* Lib. ix. 613. † Touron, Vie de S. D. lib. v.

When the assassin stabbed the pope's legate, Peter de Castelnau, he raised his head, and regarding the murderer, said, "I pray that God may pardon you as I pardon you *!" It was the same spirit in the admirable reply of Sir Thomas More to the men who condemned him:—"As St. Paul had part in the death of Stephen, and both are in heaven, so can you, my judges, and I, be equally saved by the mercy of the Lord."

St. Elphege, archbishop of Canterbury, on refusing to redeem himself by the property of the Church, the patrimony of the poor, was martyred by the Danes, who rushed upon him with sudden fury, and struck him with their swords to the earth; while others advancing, threw a shower of stones upon him. In his last agony he had strength enough to utter a prayer for himself and his murderers: "Lord Jesus, Son of God the Highest, who came through the Virgin's womb to save sinners, receive me and have mercy on them!" Do you mark how the tradition lives? You might learn it even from the tombs of the middle ages, as from that of Jerome Savina, in the church of St. Mary of Mercy at Venice.

The holy man, St. Berchaire, in the seventh century, was assassinated by a wretch named Daguin, whom he had befriended from youth. It was in the year 685, on Easter-day, after mass, when the saint had retired to take a little rest, that the murderer fell upon him with a knife, and after giving him many wounds, fled, but was taken by some of the monks, and brought back to the place where St. Berchaire lay, who, remembering the words of Jesus upon the cross, said to him with his last breath, "My son, appease the anger of God by a long penitence; for my part, I freely forgive you; but go to Rome, my child, to receive pardon for what you have done from the holy father, who has power to pardon you." And with these words he died. The wretch Daguin was permitted accordingly to depart; and he set out for Rome, "but he has not yet returned," says the ancient author of this Passion †.

It is recorded of St. Gregory of Utrecht, by his disciple St. Liudger, that he practised, in its literal sense, that divine injunction, "Bless those that curse you." It

* Vaissette, Hist. du Languedoc.

† Desguerois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 192.

was his daily practice to show peculiar kindness to those who injured him. St. Francis Regis, being struck by a certain libertine, fulfilled to the very letter the precept of our Lord, and presented him the other cheek, saying meekly, "My brother, if you knew me, you would judge that I merit worse treatment."

The silence of Catholics under insult and injury was not, therefore, of the Homeric stamp, though it is thought that it must have been such by some modern writers. It did not resemble the silence of Ulysses, who disdained to answer Melanthius while meditating dreadful revenge, and who merely leaned his head on one side to avoid being struck by the ox's joint hurled at him by Ctesippus, at the same time grimly smiling in his heart at the thought of the coming vengeance. It was the silence of love and innocence, of real deep humility, abstraction from the world, and conformity to the divine will.

Godelef, a virgin martyr of the eleventh century, is one of the most celebrated saints of the Netherlands. In what did her eminent grace particularly consist? In this divine patience and sweetness under injury. Born in the vicinity of Boulogne-sur-Mer, and married at an early age to Bertulf, a Flemish gentleman resident in the diocese of Bruges, though possessing great personal attractions, yet scarcely was she under her husband's roof than she became the victim of barbarous ill-usage, both from him and his kindred. In consequence of his sudden dislike, she became a prisoner in his house. She was debarred from all food except bread and water—cursed, insulted, beaten; but so far from a murmur escaping her lips, her pillow by night and her face by day were bedewed with tears for his sake. For his conversion she hourly offered prayers to heaven; nor did once a hint of the barbarity she experienced reach her own family, till she was expelled from his roof, and forced to look to it for support. The bishop, being apprised of the fact, compelled the husband to receive her back and promise amendment; but immediately on her return, he meditated her death. Finding that starvation would not answer his impatience, he directed his confidential domestics to strangle her. At midnight she was called up by the murderers; and as she left her chamber, in obedience, as she supposed, to her husband's

commands, she was strangled and quietly laid on her bed; and when, the next morning, she was found dead, the report was spread that she had destroyed herself. A recent historian, in allusion to this saint, is constrained to renounce all the prejudices of his sect, and to admit that here indeed canonization was deserved; for no one ever so returned good for evil—none ever so devoutly prayed for enemies—none ever wore so smiling a countenance amidst the most dreadful privations, amidst the wreck of every earthly hope, when life must necessarily have been a burden.

We find another moving example in the annals of the Capuchins. Mathieu de Bassio, one of the first fathers of the reform in the order of St. Francis, having been cast into prison at Macerata by John of Fano, provincial minister, who subsequently embraced the same holy profession which he at first persecuted, was unwilling to avail himself of the good offices of the merciful who sought to deliver him. A certain priest of that family, being greatly displeased at the severity with which the prisoner was treated, went to him secretly, and promised to open the doors of his prison during the night, that he might escape; but Mathieu indignantly refused, and rebuked the pious brother, saying, "The cross of Christ is not so horrible that a man of faith should fear it, or seek to avoid it; but it is, on the contrary, a good which he should receive with open arms whenever it is offered to him. You advise me not well; far be from me such an unworthy action. Cease to recommend things which savour not of God, lest you should seem to despise that divine wisdom which is offered to me, that it may be glorified in my cross." The priest, discovering from these words the admirable perfection of the man, and finding it useless to attempt further to persuade him, resolved to adopt other means; and for that purpose proceeded to Camerino, in order to excite the duchess, Catherine Ciboa, to procure his deliverance; but before her letters could take effect, the brethren of that house had convinced him that it was his duty to consult for the general good, and, after the example of the Prince of the apostles, to leave a prison of which the doors were thrown open to him; so that, after a confinement of three months, he recovered his liberty. His interview, shortly afterwards, with the Duchess of Camerino, pre-

sented a memorable instance of charity on one side, and of forgiveness on the other. While that illustrious woman received the holy man with all the tenderness of a pious mother, and interrogated him respecting his sufferings, he assured her that the Provincial had done nothing but with the best intentions, and that whatever hardship he might have undergone was owing, not to the fault of that man, but to some other cause, which he attempted to explain in such a manner as to absolve him from all suspicion of evil *.

As a rule of general manners, the maxim of St. Augustin, "Inimicitiæ vitandæ cautissime, ferendæ æquissime, finiendæ citissime," was so well observed in ages of faith, that the latter part was not deemed accomplished unless the very letter of the evangelic precept was complied with; of which we have a striking instance in the contest which arose between Nicetas Patricius and St. John, patriarch of Constantinople, respecting the affairs of the poor, which the former was accused of neglecting; for after high words, a separation between them, without a reconciliation, having taken place, towards evening the patriarch sent to inform him that the sun was about to set. Patricius, moved by the remonstrance, returned to the patriarch, when they embraced and became friends as before †.

A Spanish ecclesiastic published a bitter pasquinade against Pope Pius V., and the magistrates had condemned him to the penalty which the law awarded; but this holy pontiff sent for the prisoner, and gave him full pardon, adding, "My friend, when you observe, in future, any defect in my conduct, I pray you to warn me of it, that I may correct myself ‡."

Urban IV., to whom the Church is indebted for the great festival of the adorable Eucharist, had occasion to evince the same spirit. Having been sent, while only archdeacon of Liege, from Lyons into Germany, by Pope Innocent IV., he was violently seized by three gentlemen of the diocese of Treves, who threw him into prison and took possession of his horses, money, and other effects. When elevated to the chair of St. Peter, he received a

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1525.
† Drexelii de Vitiis Linguæ, cap. 10.
‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv.

petition from these gentlemen, offering to make restitution, but desiring to be dispensed from going in person to Rome to receive absolution, in regard to the perils of the journey. Urban IV. immediately gave commission to the prior of the Dominicans at Coblentz to absolve them, and charged him to say that he freely forgave them both the insult and the injury, only enjoining on them to refrain in future from similar acts *.

As connected with the piety of the religious in the middle ages, let us take but two more examples of the forgiving spirit, and mark its action in youth and age, in the student of Cluni and in the venerable and renowned master of Citeaux. Odo was an innocent and pacific lad in the school of Cluni. "He used," says an ancient writer, "to be insulted and persecuted by some wicked youths, of whom Wido was the prince, instigating them to injure him. On a certain occasion, one of them replied, 'What avails it, when we cannot provoke him to anger? Besides, he is more learned than any of us, and he is always ready to teach me whatever I desire to learn. I fear lest he should at length refuse to assist me, if I continue daily to persecute him.' To whom Wido answered, 'He is not what you imply; for brother Odo is of that character, that he will bear not only these things, but much worse, and afterwards he will be ready cheerfully to teach you whatever you may wish †.'"

When such mercy and patience belonged to the character of Catholic youth, what may we not expect from the holy men who were raised up to instruct and edify it?

The Epistle which is placed the first among these of St. Bernard, which begins, "Satis et plusquam satis," is a most admirable model of charity. It is addressed to his nephew Robert, a youth who had deserted the Cistercian order for Cluny. "Sufficient and more than sufficient time I have waited, my dearest son Robert, to observe whether the piety of God would vouchsafe to regard your soul by itself, or mine through you,—yours by inspiring it with compunction, and mine by filling it with joy on your account; but since I have been frustrated hitherto

* Bullar. Ord. Predic. tom. i.
† Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 28.

in my hopes, I am no longer able to conceal my grief, to repress my anxiety, to dissemble my sadness; therefore, against the order of right, I who have been wounded, am obliged to recall him who wounded me, despised, him who despised me, injured, him who injured me. For grief does not deliberate, does not blush, does not consult reason, does not fear the loss of dignity, is ignorant of measure and of order. But you will say, I have never injured or despised any one, but rather it is I who was despised and hurt, and I only fled from him who did me wrong. Was it not better to yield to a persecutor than to resist him? to fly a striker than to strike him again? Rightly; I admit it. It is not to contend that I have begun this, but that I might remove contentions. The fault is in him who persecutes, not in him who flies the persecutor. I do not deny it; I omit what is done; I do not examine why or how it was done; I do not discuss faults, I do not remember injuries; I only speak of what I have more at heart. Alas, wretched me, that I should be deprived of you! that I should not see you! and that I should live without you! for whom to die would be to me to live; and without whom to live would be to die! I ask not then why you went away, but I complain that you do not return. Only come, and it shall be peace; return, and there will be full satisfaction. Certainly it was my fault that you departed; for I was too austere to a delicate youth, and too hardly did I treat a tender plant: for, as well as I can remember, this is what you used to object to me. That shall not be imputed to you: I might perhaps offer some excuse for myself, and appeal to the Scripture, which attests the necessity of discipline for youth; but it was, as I have said already, my fault that caused you to depart; but from henceforth it will begin to be also yours, if you do not spare the penitent, and grant indulgence to him who confesses; because, though I might have been indiscreet towards you, I could never have been malevolent; but if you should fear this very indiscretion for the future, you should know that I am no more what I was, than you are what you were. Changed, you shall find me changed. Do you wish to be free from all fault? return. If you acknowledge your fault, I pardon you. Do you also pardon me when I acknowledge mine. Fearlessly come whither humility calls you, whither charity draws you; you fled from one that

was severe; return to one that is gentle. I have known your mind, that can more easily be moved by love than by fear. And if any one should wonder that a simple, modest, and timid boy should dare to desert his own, and his place, and his vow, against the will of his brethren and the command of his master, let him also wonder that David, and Solomon, and Samson, should have been betrayed into error. When man could be deceived so as to lose the country of felicity, why should it seem strange that a tender youth should be enticed from a place of horror and a vast solitude. A vain prudence represented holy discipline as indiscretion; and the credulous boy is tempted to follow the seducer; he is received with honours, and preferred above his equals. But, my dear little son, consult your own heart, because you know yourself better than another can know you. Ask yourself, why you departed? why you left your order, your brethren, your place, and me, who am nearer in flesh, and nearer in spirit? If it was that you might live in more perfection, be at rest, for then you have not looked back; glory with the Apostle, and say that you have looked to the things before you, and to the palm of glory; but if otherwise, be not lifted up, but fear since you have looked back, you have prevaricated, you have apostatized. And this I say, my son, not to confound you, but that I may admonish you as a dearest son; for if you have many teachers in Christ, yet you have not many fathers, for I have begotten you in religion; I have nourished you with milk as a little one, and I was about to feed you with bread, if you had waited till you were grown up. You have been torn from me, but I can never forget you; not indeed bone of my bone, or flesh of my flesh, but the joy of my heart, the fruit of my spirit, the crown of my hope, and as I feel, the half of my soul."

This is styled the miraculous letter; for he dictated it sitting in the open air, as was his custom, without the monastery, and a shower of rain coming on, the person who wrote proposed to cover the sheet, but the holy father forbad him, saying, "It is the work of God, write on:" the scribe continued to write, and no rain fell upon the letters.

But let us consider the more ordinary action of mercy in the forgiveness of injuries, and view it in the manners

of men engaged in secular life. Nunquam injuria accepta ad ulciscendum ductus. These words of Helgald, which refer to Robert, king of the Franks, might be used, with equally strict historical justice, when speaking of the emperors Lewis and Henry, of our Edward the Confessor, and generally of all sovereigns who corresponded to that type of a Christian king which the holy Church canonized in the person of St. Lewis. They might be applied also to many who assisted in their councils, who, like Andrew Doria, always chose to forget rather than revenge an injury. When St. Adalhard, after seven years' banishment in the island of Heri, was restored to favour by the emperor and recalled, on entering the palace he beheld the nobles, who were his enemies, confused, and evincing marks of shame for what they had done against him; but he prevented their asking forgiveness, and with downcast eyes thus sweetly spoke: "O emperor, and ye princes, nothing happens in the world without the judgment of God. If God hath punished us for our sins, why should that affect you? We ourselves must see to it. You could have done nothing without God's permission. Let us now only obey his orders; forgive, and you shall be forgiven; which I do first, and do you follow me." Then all embraced him, and the man of God proceeded to his monastery, which he had never hoped to see again *.

When Louis XII. succeeded to the crown, he marked with a red cross the names of all those who had most sensibly disobliged him during the reign of his predecessor, saying, "that he did so only to cancel their offence by the remembrance of the blood of Jesus Christ." And he left an eternal monument of this action, in a medal on which was the figure of the cross, with these words under it: "Rubra crux salutis signum albaque Francorum."

Antonio Galatea, in his beautiful description of the country of Otranto, mentions a still more remarkable instance. "The city of Galatana," saith he, "took the side of Joan, queen of Naples, when the Japygian land was laid waste by James Caldora. After their deaths the whole country fell into the power of John Antonio, who condemned my father, as an enemy, to banishment; but

* Vita S. Adalhardi apud Mabillon Acta S. Ord. S. Bened. sæcul. iv. p. 1.

he, on hearing the sentence, wrote to him in these terms: 'Having received no injury from you, good prince, I resisted you to the utmost of my power; for I thought to keep my faith in obeying the orders of the queen, whom Naples and the greatest part of the kingdom followed. Whether she justly adopted Alphonso, or afterwards justly abdicated, it was for her to examine. Some followed the side of the mother; others, of the son. We must all now admit the justice of that cause, for which God has decided. You have conquered. Do not vex those who are conquered. I ask no pardon from you, for I have not sinned: this only I pray and beseech, that you would not suppose I acted from any hatred against you, or through ambition.' These words so pleased the good prince, that if he had before any anger against him, it changed into love; and as long as my father lived, he was always one of his dearest friends, till the day of his heroic death, suffered for the truth of God *."

But it is where the offence was more immediately personal, that the forgiveness practised by those who studied in the book of mercy, appears most sublime. Memorable was the conduct of the Duchesse de Montmorency, who founded, in several convents of the visitation, places for the gratuitous maintenance of the daughters of those families at Toulouse, which had been instrumental in causing the death of her husband, supposing that some of them might wish to retire from the world as she herself had done †.

Pasquier says, that the President De Thou was always ready to be reconciled with those who had offended him, or rather, he adds, "I am wrong in saying reconciled, for he did not know what it was to hate any one."

The charity, patience, and forbearance, which reigned in all domestic relations, in ages of faith, presents a theme which is not undeserving of attention. If, in a moment of haste, a Joinville had uttered an angry word to the meanest of his servants, before the setting of the sun he would express his contrition. There was none of that clamour and wrath, which so often disturbs the houses of the moderns. Balthazar Gracian, in his instruction for

* Anton. Galatei de Situ Japygiæ liber in Thesaur. Antiq. Italiæ ix.

† Marsollier, Vie de Mde. de Chantal, ii. 156.

nobles, relates that Don Lopez de Acusia, putting on his armour before a battle, desired his squires to adjust his helmet better, as it hurt his ears; but they assuring him that it was right, he went forth, and on his return, taking it off, his ear came with it; but he only said, gently, "Did I not say truly that it was ill put on."

An English traveller in Portugal describing his visit to the Marquis of Penalvas, and observing the multitude of persons whom that beneficent family loved to harbour, says, "that he found Donna Henriquetta seated on the steps which led up to the great pavilion, whispering to some of her favourite attendants, who, like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, were continually giving their opinion of whatever was going forward." Such communications, though conveyed in the verse of Sophocles, would not be tolerated in society constituted upon modern principles; but, in Catholic manners, patience and condescension entered into the characters of mercy. No where, if you will hear the same writer, is the sacred precept of honouring your father and mother so cordially observed as in that nation. The dutiful, affectionate attention of young persons to their parents, which struck him as so truly amiable, was an essential part of Catholic manners; yet it is no less observable, that the meekness which entered into the composition of the merciful sweetened all authority, whether of public or domestic character. St. Bernard writes to the Countess of Blois, excusing the faults of her son, on the ground of his youth, and reminding her that they must not prevent her from evincing the affection of a mother. "You must act towards him," he says, "in a spirit of gentleness and soothing fondness, for by so doing he will be more excited to good works than if you exasperated him by irritations and reproof*."

It is remarkable, that through all the relations of life, the maxims and traditions of chivalry co-operated with religion in this respect; for we may remember, it was an axiom of honour, universally received even in the world, that patience was the characteristic of noble manners.

We have already had occasion to observe, that in regard to the legal punishment of enemies, and of persons who had committed injustice, the mercy of men in the

* Epist. ccc.

middle ages was frequently exercised in a most ingenious and striking manner. Alexander, Patriarch of Jerusalem, having been robbed by one of his notaries, who fled into Egypt, hearing that this man was captured by banditti, sent a large sum of money to redeem him; so that it became a proverb, "Nothing more useful than to injure Alexander *."

Alfonso XI. besieging Algeziras, in which famine began to reign, a Sarassin, leaving the city, stole into the Spanish camp, and was discovered with concealed weapons, for the purpose of assassinating him. All cried out, that justice should be executed upon such a wretch; but Alfonso sent him in safety to the Sarassin king, in Africa, as one who had loved his country more than his own life †."

Evidently, these manners of merciful men, in ages of faith, would have interfered with what is termed the course of justice, and prevented the law from exercising such an influence upon society, as it afterwards came to produce; and yet nothing is clearer than that they were in conformity with the spirit of the Christian religion, as interpreted by the holy fathers. "If any one," says St. Jerome, "commit adultery, homicide, sacrilege, and thus become debtor of ten thousand talents, and ask our forgiveness, if we, on account of the contumely of the deed, be implacable, shall we not ourselves be justly cast into prison, to pay what we may owe to the last farthing ‡?" Accordingly, by the canon law it was taught, that no one should apply to magistrates to seek revenge, but purely to have justice maintained for the general interest of the state §."

"If you wish, through hatred, the legal punishment of men who have done you an injury, you will sin mortally," says Guy de Roye, in his Doctrinal de Sapience. When the injury was political, and kings the object, there was no exception. Such manners and principles were strangely at variance with those adopted in later times, and with the spirit and letter of many parliamentary acts in England during the reigns of Elizabeth and her successors,

* Sophron. Pratum Spirituale, cap. 34.
† Roderici Santii Hist. Hispaniæ, pars iv. c. 12.
‡ S. Hieron. Hom. lib. iii. Com. in Matt. xviii.
§ Gregorius Tholosanus, Præludia Jurisconsulti, lib. iv. 8.

when men, not content with the severity of penal laws, formed associations, and bound themselves as members of such fraternities, to pursue unto death such and such persons. Nothing, in fact, can be more striking than the contrast between the effects of the Catholic religion, and those of the reformed creed, upon the ideas adopted with regard to the endurance or punishment of wrong,—between the philosophy of cruel, cold, formal men, righteous in words, and those habits of thinking of the miserable with gentleness, of cherishing mild, pitying thoughts, whatever might be the crime and shame,—of erring, not in harsh severity, but in tears and patience. But when impatience was religion, it is not surprising that revenge should have been law. It is clear, from history, that all the old Christian notions of mercy and forgiveness, on supernatural grounds, had passed away before the education of the moderns. It would be in vain to deny it: they were all antiquated, exploded notions, though there was a decent reserve of formality maintained, in regard to the texts of the bible. General merit or expediency, previous services or regard for the interest of other parties, natural benevolence or magnanimity, might weigh much, when it was a question of abating punishment; but neither kings nor people would have relaxed one iota from what they deemed justice, by seeing their Saviour suspended on the cross. Ah! they did well to take down his image from their tribunals, seeing that it had been so completely effaced from their hearts. With them, as with the Gentiles of old, it was a pious duty to avenge the slain; and the public mind was convinced, that it would be wholly useless to consult the living, since, through regard for the dead alone, it would be impossible for kings to pardon. Let us hasten back to the days of the blessed merciful. The sovereign pontiffs repeatedly set an example to the world of uniting forgiveness of their enemies with a just regard to the interests of society. When Peter de Corbiere, the antipope, who had caused ruin and desolation in so many cities of Italy, had been vanquished and taken, he was sent to Avignon, where the Pope whom he had excommunicated and deposed was then residing. "The said Peter being penitent," says Bernard Guido, "was clemently and mercifully received, but was placed under a decent custody, that it might be proved whether he would walk

in darkness or in light. At present, while I am writing these lines, he is there treated as a familiar friend, but guarded as an enemy *." Balthazar Cossa, formerly called John XXIII., had languished, during three years, in a prison in Germany, when Leonard de Datis, general of the Dominicans, and apostolic legate, at the head of many illustrious Florentines addressed the reigning Pope, to beg that he might obtain his liberty. Whether Martin V. had already treated with the Count Palatin for the deliverance of the prisoner, or whether, as Ciaconius, and some other writers affirm, he obtained his deliverance from this prince by force of money, certain it is, that the prison opened its gates to him; and on arriving in the neighbourhood of Parma, he found many of his ancient friends, who received him with respect; some of whom, even through affection or self-interest, entreated him to resume the pontifical habit;—that is, to rekindle the flames of schism and war: but misfortune had changed Balthazar Cossa into another man. His resolution was taken, and, without intimating it to any of his friends, he proceeded almost alone to Florence, without providing any security for his person. On arriving, he went immediately to the Dominican convent of S. Maria Novella, where Martin V. was then residing, threw himself at the Pope's feet, implored his mercy, and recognised him as the sole true vicar of Jesus Christ. A step so edifying, and so little expected, drew tears from the eyes of every one present. The Pope, more moved than all besides, after having raised him up, and given him a thousand testimonies of sincere affection, did all in his power to alleviate the contrast between his present and past condition, receiving him into the number of cardinals, making him dean of the sacred college, and ordering, that in all public ceremonies, Cossa should be the nearest to his person, and placed on a seat higher than all others but his own †. Nor were the local rulers of the Church slow to imitate these examples. When Gautier, commander of the Florentine troops, who styled himself duke of Athens, had established his power as a tyrant over that

* Tractatur ut familiaris, sed custoditur ut hostis. Bern. Guid. in Vita Joan. xxii.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. xviii.

restless people, and when they sought to cast off his cruel yoke, he attempted to inveigle three hundred of the first citizens into the citadel, under pretence of conferring with them on the state of the republic; but, in fact, with a design of cutting them off at once, which was discovered by the people, who, in a fury of resentment, rose in arms, and besieged him in the fortress, which was defended by his satellites. What the conspiracies of private men, and the violence of an armed multitude, had failed to effect, was accomplished by the prudence of Angelo Acciajoli, bishop of Florence. He saved the blood of the citizens, put an end to the tyranny, but, what is most remarkable, saved also the life of the tyrant, who surrendered the fortress to him, and confided his person to his hands. The bishop provided both for his safety, and for that of the republic; within the domains of which the fallen despot was never more seen *.

These are certainly admirable examples; yet, in point of poetic interest, they yield to those instances of mercy to personal enemies exercised in war, which we find recorded in all our ancient heroic chronicles. Plato observes, that it is absurd to insult the dead body of the slain, regarding it as your enemy, ἀποπταμένου τοῦ ἐχθροῦ; the real enemy, that is, the soul, having then flown away, and disappeared †." This was all that he could urge in favour of the dead; so little idea had even the philosopher of arguing on the absurdity of hating any one, or of pursuing any one with implacable rage. The men whom he addresses would have killed the soul of their enemy, if possible; and so he only shows them that, as that cannot be done, it is useless to expend their fury upon the inanimate carcass. The Catholic hero, like Guize, or even Richard of the lion's heart, unlike the Homeric, seeks not revenge in death. He sleeps in peace when his wrongs are forgiven, and repaid with benefits: then it is that his surviving friend may exclaim, with Deiphobus, My companion lies not unhonoured—

————ἀλλά ἔ φημι
εἰς Ἄϊδός περ ἰόντα πυλάρταο κρατεροῖο
γηθήσειν κατὰ θυμόν· ἐπεί ῥά οἱ ὥπασα πομπόν—

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. xiii.

† Plato de Repub. liv. v.

followed not by the soul of a slaughtered enemy, but by the prayer of a contrite and forgiven foe *.

When Earl Percy, in Chevy Chase, takes the dead Earl Douglas by the hand, exclaiming,

"O, Christ! my very heart doth bleed with sorrow for thy sake,"

we have the new morality of the supernatural law commemorated and displayed before our eyes with an Homeric simplicity. Indeed, that acts of such forgiveness emanated purely from the religious principle, often extorted by the ingenious violence of holy men in ages of faith, and that they were still combated in human breasts by the sentiments of the old nature, is shown by poets. Thus, when De Wilton spares Marmion, he expressly admits, that it was in remembrance of his vow to spare his greatest enemy for Austin's sake: for hearken to his own tale:

"Then had three inches of my blade
The heavy debt of vengeance paid.
My hand the thought of Austin staid;
I left him there alone.
O, good old man! e'en from the grave
Thy spirit could thy master save."

That sooner or later, even bold and desperate men were enabled to receive and practise the doctrine of the cross, may be inferred from the confession of Mortham to Matilda, when relating the history of his own life, and saying, "Deep were my plans of vengeance at that time;

But humble be my thanks to heaven,
That better hopes and thoughts has given;
And by our Lord's dear prayer has taught
Mercy by mercy must be bought."

When Alhama was besieged by the Moors, the Marquis of Cadiz and the Christians being in the last distress, the Marquis applied to his old hereditary enemy, Don Juan de Gusman, duke of Medina Sidonia, for assistance, and this gallant knight, forgetting all animosity, hastened in person to his succour, declaring, that the loss of the Marquis would be grievous to all Christendom. When the duke had defeated the Moors, and entered the town, the Christians, who had endured the horrors of the

* Il. xiii. 415.

siege resembled skeletons rather than living men. It was a noble and gracious sight to behold the meeting of those two ancient foes, the duke of Medina Sidonia and the marquis of Cadiz. When the marquis beheld his magnanimous deliverer approaching, he melted into tears: all past animosities only gave the greater poignancy to present feelings of gratitude and admiration; they clasped each other in their arms, and from that time forwards, were true and constant friends.

These are instances of individual mercy; but we have proof of the same spirit dictating the conduct of a whole people in ages of faith. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, Miladan, governor of Dalmatia and Croatia, profiting by the troubled state of Hungary, had raised himself as a tyrant over that whole country, which he oppressed with the utmost ferocity. Knowing no law but his own will, the clergy and the poor were his victims: his avarice had no bounds; his pirate vessels even ravaged the coast of Italy; while at home, with the utmost tranquillity he saw flow the blood and tears of the enslaved people. The blessed Augustin de Gazothes, who then ruled the Church of Zagrab, had the courage to admonish repeatedly this tyrant, who was rather a monster than a man; but though all his efforts were in vain, he said, publicly, that he would never cease to pray for his conversion. The justice of God at length overtook him: his own brother Paul, at the head of the chief nobles, contrived to catch him in their nets. Abandoned by his satellites, and loaded with chains, he was conducted before the king of Hungary, who had the magnanimity to spare his life, content to shut him up in a close prison in the city of Zagrab. After bearing his irons in impatience a long time, he at length escaped from prison, and passed a considerable interval in flight from one city to another, till Providence ordained that he should fall into the hands of the Traguriens, his mortal enemies. The remembrance of all the evils which he had inflicted upon them was sufficient to excite a spirit of vengeance, and his obstinacy in impiety had hitherto remained invincible; yet it pleased Heaven to work a miracle in his favour, making of this great sinner an illustrious penitent, and inspiring, at the same time, his enemies with sentiments not only of humanity and compassion towards him, but of love and tenderness; for as much as they had detested

Miladan proud and cruel, they loved him humble and converted. It was remembered how the holy bishop of Zagrab used to protest that he would never cease to pray for his conversion; and now, when they witnessed the humiliation of their ancient persecutor, they recognised the power of that holy man's intercession, and believed that they were the instruments of God in showing mercy to the conquered *.

It is remarked, by ancient writers of Normandy, that at Rouen, the criminals who had been delivered by the chapter of the cathedral on the festival of the ascension, and their accomplices, who had fled, or taken sanctuary, were thenceforth as secure from being troubled or reproached by the friends and relations of those whom they had slain or injured, as they were from being called to further account by the civil authority. Thus, in 1370, John and Thomas Baratte, after killing Gueroult, having been delivered by the privilege, used to walk publicly through the streets of Rouen, without receiving any reproach or insult from the friends of the dead †; and similarly, Guillaume Dangiens, accomplice of Guillaume Yon, rescued, by the same power, from the death to which he had been sentenced, for slaying Colin de la Chapelle, at Pavilly, returned to his dwelling, trusting in that act, married, and became father of many children; and from the day of his return till his death, lived peaceably in the said town, exercising his trade as a tanner, and never was troubled or reproached by the friends of the dead, or reminded by them of having committed that crime ‡. In the annals of the Capuchins, we find an instance still more beautiful. Baptist Faventinus had been, for a long time, the head of all the proscribed and infamous men of the province of Æmilia, feared as a monster rather than as a human being, of such strength, that, seizing a man with one hand in the waist, he could hold him elevated in the air, and having the right arm so long, that a sword which he wielded seemed a spear. He had won renown in war, under the duke of Urbino; but the natural ferocity and turpitude of his mind reduced him to

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. St. Dom. tom. ii. liv. ix.

† Floquet, Hist. du Privilège de St. Romain, i. 102.

‡ Id. i. 104.

the ranks of the most flagitious men. Having, however, by accident heard Bernardine Senensis preach at Florence, he was suddenly illuminated by the grace of heaven, and converted to a religious life. St. Bernardine, to whom he had immediately applied for admission into the order of Capuchins, after finishing his Lent sermons, prepared to return from Florence to his province of Bologna, and apprised the new convertite, that if he were sincere in his professions, he must be ready to accompany him on foot, and carry a sack of books upon his shoulders. The once ferocious and haughty outlaw desired now nothing so much as suffering and humiliation; so they set out together. Bernardine took the road to Faenza, the native town of his companion, and passed through the towns of Crispino, Brexillo, and Fuliniana; in all of which Baptist had committed murders; so that at every step he had reason to expect death, if not the horrible fate of Altobellus, the robber and assassin, who, when taken at Aqua Sparta, was consigned by the duke of Borgia to those whose sons and fathers he had slain, when, to the disgrace of Umbria, cruelty was so ferociously avenged *: but as he desired to suffer in expiation of his crimes, he pursued the way with intrepidity. As he still wore his secular dress of silk, the inhabitants were not long in recognising him; and, in fact, he confessed his name to each wondering interrogator, who asked if the friar's companion really were he—the terrible outlaw? No one, however, the change of the right hand of the Most High being visible, attempted to interrupt them; so they arrived at Faenza, and the convent received them within its walls. The number of enemies whom he might fear in this town could not be told; but, nevertheless, on the following day, by the desire of Bernardine, he went forth and perambulated the city with a rope round his neck. He first went to the house of a widow whose husband he had slain, and threw himself at her feet, imploring forgiveness. She burst into a flood of tears, and pardoned him on the spot. In like manner he proceeded to the houses of all the other persons whom he had injured; and in every instance he met with the blessed merciful. This sanguinary criminal excited only commiseration and astonishment, and not a word was uttered against him;

* Leandri Alberti Descript. Italiæ, 143.

but all wept and gave praise to God for having spared a sinner and given his soul grace. In process of time he was received among the novices of that convent, when the wonderful transformation of his nature became manifest to all; but he still continued to furnish occasions, from time to time, for the merciful to exercise heroic forgiveness; of which the annals of the Capuchins relate one remarkable instance:—Among the other victims whom he had slain at Faenza was a certain nobleman, of whom two sons survived, bent on revenging his death. These young men, on hearing of the murderer's conversion, persisted no less in their resolutions with regard to him, and conspired to take his life; for which purpose, accompanied with two others, they came armed to the convent, rang the gate-bell, and desired to speak with Baptist; but the porter, perceiving their arms, and doubtless somewhat that startled him in their looks, hastened to apprize the guardian that there was cause to suspect danger; who called Baptist into his presence, and informed him of the arrival of these persons demanding to see him in so suspicious a manner. Baptist asked leave to look through the grate, that he might ascertain if he knew them; and the first glance convinced him of the critical position in which he stood. Sooth they were the sons thirsting to avenge their father's murder. Nevertheless he begged that the door might be set open; and having obtained consent, he presented himself, saying, "Lo, I am the traitor, the impious Baptist, the murderer of your father! Punish me as I deserve—I merit far worse than death!"

Reader, you have seen enough of the ages of faith to know already what follows. The youths are in greater concern than the suppliant; it would be hard to tell who sheds most tears. They are clasped in each other's arms; and the formidable avengers, who came breathing slaughter, by one hint at the mercy and grace of Christ, are thenceforth the devoted friends, whose only thoughts are love and peace for evermore *.

After such a scene, one would rather say nothing than propose a comment. It is clear that the dearest friends in ages of faith had been often those who would have been the objects of immortal hatred in unblessed hearts;

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1562.

it is clear that the difficulty of this virtue gave it only additional charms in the eyes of men; so that heroic protection was often extended to an enemy, which might have been withheld, through neglect or forgetfulness, from one who had never been seen in the position of a foe. It was the saying popular at Rome during the pontificate of Pius V., that if any one wished to gain some favour from him, he ought to begin by doing him an injury. In fine, what more than all proves the divine source from which this blessed mercy of forgiveness emanated, we discover its action in cases where it could be accompanied and assisted by no power of the imagination, and under circumstances which must have rendered its acquisition wholly beyond the reach of human efforts, when it could only have been exercised from the solitary, interior desire of pleasing God.

Visit with me once more the savage rock, the castle safely walled and moated round about, its dungeons under ground, and its thick towers, "that never told tales, though they have heard and seen what might make dumb things speak." There the mute and faded smiles of captive youth, when the rust of heavy chains has gangrened its sweet limbs, and all its mild words from first to last attest, that it has no feeling towards its foes but resignation and forgiveness!

Silvio Pellico is an author who may with strict propriety be cited as illustrating the character of the middle ages; for where the same faith exists, all separation and difference of time ceases; and as a Catholic of the tenth century might be taken for one of our contemporaries of the same faith, so any book which is written at the present day in the genuine spirit of Catholicism might be supposed to date from an epoch of the olden time. He says, in the memoirs of his own captivity, that the irritation which ruled him since his condemnation had made him irreligious, but that the virtue of his poor young fellow-prisoner, Oroboni, who always defended and forgave his enemies, at length influenced him to follow in that divine track. "Then," says he, "when I could again pray sincerely for all the world, and abandon all hatred, my doubts as to faith vanished. Ubi charitas et amor, Deus ibi est." This young count, Antonio Oroboni, condemned with Pellico to hard imprisonment in the fortress of Spielberg, in Moravia, a model of piety

and charity, died at length in that prison; and the description of his death is so completely in harmony with the characters of the middle ages represented in history, that I have no scruple in citing it to illustrate them:—"What a shudder," says Pellico, "ran through my veins when they told me he was dead! I heard the voice and steps of those who came for the body. I saw from my window the cart which was to bear him to the cemetery: it was drawn by two of the convicts; four guards followed it. I accompanied with my eyes this sad convoy to the spot. It entered the enclosure; it stopped at the corner of the wall—there was the grave. How often had he said to me, while looking at the spot from his window, 'I must accustom myself to the idea of resting there; but I confess that it is repugnant to me. I could be more easily resigned to death on one condition: if I could but return once more under my paternal roof, embrace my father's knees, hear one word of benediction, and die!' He sighed and added, 'If this cup cannot pass, O my God, thy will be done!' The last morning of his life, he said, on kissing the crucifix which Kral presented to him, 'Thou who wert God hadst nevertheless a horror of death; and thou saidst, 'Si possibile est, transeat à me calix iste!' Pardon if I say it likewise; but I repeat also thy other words, 'Verumtamen non sicut ego volo, sed sicut tu.' He died on the 13th of June, 1823. A few hours before expiring, he spoke of his octogenarian father, and wept; adding, 'But why weep for the happiest of those who are dear to me, since he is on the eve of rejoining me in the abode of eternal peace?' His last words were, 'I pardon my enemies from my heart.' How like the youngest prisoner in that song of Chillon!—

> 'And not a word of murmur—not
> A groan o'er his untimely lot;—
> A little talk of better days,
> A little hope my own to raise.'"

Such are the death-scenes in the dungeons of the middle age—such is the testimony of history respecting the action of blessed mercy towards the objects of men's fear or hate! It is the same spirit wherever the Catholic religion exists, wherever lips have been trained from

childhood to kiss the crucifix. A whole world of vengeful and cruel tragedy has been annihilated in the human heart, and a new creation effected there. What more new to it than mercy to the foe in war, mercy to the criminal in presence of the judicial power, mercy to the wretched agents of inhuman wrong,—holy mercy, exceptionless, dictating love to the foe, compassion to the guilty, and forgiveness to the oppressor?

CHAPTER VIII.

The mercy which is occupied in relieving the poor forms so essential a part of Catholic justice, and enters so largely into every branch of duty belonging to the manners of a Catholic state, that having already considered them in relation to poverty of spirit, meekness, mourning, and justice, it might be imagined there would be nothing left in the way of historical illustration to throw light upon the exercise of this virtue in the middle ages, since so much has been already exhibited in connexion with the four first qualifications for the attainment of divine beatitude. "I question not," as Dante says, "but he who searched our volumes leaf by leaf might still find a page with this inscription on it, 'I am, as I was wont.'" Nevertheless, somewhat still remains unseen; nor would it, indeed, have been possible to exhaust the subject of mercy to the poor, as it was taught and practised during the ages of faith. That it was the inseparable attendant upon the preceding graces will be obvious to any one who considers for a moment their character and object. The poor in spirit must necessarily have loved those who were in a situation the most favourable, perhaps, to the development and exercise of the same grace. The meek could not but love those who were the peculiar and fitting objects towards whom they should exercise humility. Mourners would naturally seek to join the society of those who were alike unhappy. Those who had compassion on

themselves, labouring in the groans of penitence, which, saith St. Bernard, is the first stage of mercy *, would not be remiss in tenderness to others; besides that all penitential exercises of necessity involved mercy to the poor; so that Alanus de Insulis and Vincent of Beauvais, or he who continued his great work, and in general all such writers, immediately after treating on confession and satisfaction, proceed to the subject of alms. Above all, they who thirsted after justice could not but feel the strict obligation of ministering to the wants of their distressed brethren; "for to give alms," as the same moralists remark, "is a part of justice; and although the transgressors of this precept are not punished by human laws, yet are they by the divine law †." They inform us, indeed, that in the language of David justice is nothing else but mercy, as in the line so often sung by the Church, beginning with, "Dispersit, dedit pauperibus;" which is the justice enduring for ever, that the prophet also saith shall go before the face of the merciful; at the sight of which beautiful precursor, angel-like, with golden wings, the gates of heaven, as St. Chrysostom saith, will open instantly, without there being any in the city of the blessed so daring, or amongst the seraphs so inflamed and burning, as to attempt to question their right of entrance ‡.

In the society, however, of the middle ages, men were not left to learn this duty by inferences only. Most striking is the sentence and admonition of the venerable Bede, when he shows that only by charity to the poor can those persons who remain in the world expect to join hereafter the society of the religious who had persevered in the way of perfection, in conformity with the counsels of Christ. "There are," saith he, "two orders of elect in the future judgment: the one of those judging with the Lord, who left all and followed him; the other of those judged by the Lord, who did not indeed similarly leave all things, but yet who of the things which they possessed gave daily alms to the poor of Christ, who will therefore hear at judgment, Venite benedicte §."

* De Conversione, c. 16.
† Vin. Bellov. Specul. Mor. lib. iii. p. x. dist. 19.
‡ Ap. Cresolii Anth. Sacra.
§ Bede in Natali S. Benedicti.

Here, again, we are presented, in the history of Catholic manners, with a feature divine and supernatural. "Endeavour to be charitable only by your reason," says an ascetic writer: "you will endeavour in vain." As the origin of that virtue is more elevated, so are its indications often distinct from all signs of mere natural benevolence. Charity is not to be estimated by its external acts; it is extinguished often amidst the greatest largesse, and it burns with all its ardour in the smallest alms. It is divine love which constitutes the value of alms, as of martyrdom *. To give them through vain glory is evil, notwithstanding the goodness of the external act †."

The moralists of the middle ages show in great detail the necessity of paying attention to the quality of alms, teaching that they must be given in purity of affection and intention, in charity and from charity, not through a desire of human praise or any temporal advantage; and that they must be offered with humility and devotion, as if recognizing our Lord in the person of the poor ‡. We shall be convinced, as we advance, that in consequence of this doctrine the social condition of the poor in the middle ages was very different from what later philosophers are apt to represent as being natural and just, and that the material order in regard to them was greatly modified by the spiritual. The triumph of the cross, in fact, seems to have been most complete here.

In the middle ages there was a celebrated legend respecting an infidel prince, who refused to believe the truth of the Christian religion, because, on being presented at the court of Charlemagne, he observed that the poor were placed at a low table, and provided with inferior food. This was indeed the exaggerated colouring of a romance; but what would the inventors of such tales have said, if they had been told that in the chapel of Charlemagne the poor were not suffered to approach the altar, to partake of the divine mysteries, until the rich had left it? What would they have made their infidel prince say on remarking that ordinance? I think, beyond all doubt, it would be something terribly severe. I should fear to write it down, because, perhaps, if such

* Idiotæ Contemp. † S. Thom. Sum. 1, q. 20, a. 1.
‡ Vinc. Bellov. Speculum Moral. lib. iii. pars x. d. 22.

a measure were to be adopted at present in any country where the influence of the modern philosophy has been widely spread for many generations, it would surprise or offend no one. However, without being conscious of any exaggeration or arrogance, I think we might affirm that those old writers, in their simplicity, or, if you will, in their presumption, would never have thought of defending the emperor and his courtiers, who acquiesced in such a measure, by alleging reasons of convenience and expediency, but would have attempted to justify it in the eyes of the infidel by assuring him that they were men of very subtle and deep thoughts. Whether we should have heard that the answer had satisfied the malicious infidel, is another question. Even the authors of chivalrous tales were not the superficial scribes we think them. After all, the poor are men; the poor can feel themselves honoured and humiliated; and it would, certainly, in ancient times have been thought to require a very acute intelligence to contrive, with a saving of faith, to give external precedence to the rich as rich, in the immediate presence of Jesus Christ. It is most true the different ranks in society were not then marshalled in opposition to each other, as if expecting every year to gratify a mutual and long-cherished hatred in a pitched battle. The rich and great were respected by the poor, whether it was supposed, as with the Easterns and the Sclavonic races, that the word which expressed them was justly derived from the Divinity as the giver of riches, or as with the occidental nations, the Germans, Italians, and French, from royalty as coming from the king. "We do not execrate all riches and rich men," says the writer mistaken for Vincent of Beauvais, "for they are not in fault, but only the abuse. Riches are lawful, if acquired without iniquity, preserved with humbleness and the fear of God, expended with sobriety and frugality in necessary and lawful uses, and dispensed with piety to the poor *."

St. Bernard even says, "Though God is not an acceptor of persons, yet I know not how virtue in a noble person pleases more—perhaps as implying greater freedom of choice †."

The friend and lover of the people in the middle ages,

* Speculum Moral. lib. i. p. iv. 22. † Epist. cxiii.

like this living splendour of the Church, or the blessed Francis of Assisum, did not therefore seek to render noblemen unpopular, or excite the poor against the rich —did not encourage them to seize by violence what was not their own; he was not a tribune, not a Gracchus. To love the weak and unassuming is a sentiment to which the pride of our nature is not averse; but as he did, to love the rich, and mighty, and proud, is the triumph of Catholic charity. Yet it is no less certain, that through regard for the spiritual interests which are promoted by assisting and comforting the poor, the practical tendency of riches was contemplated with fear, and some degree of horror. Not the least merit was ascribed to men for becoming rich; but, on the contrary, riches without alms in strict proportion were thought a crime. To omit other considerations, it was regarded as proved from experience that happiness alone is capable of hardening the heart of man, and of rendering the acquisition of charity almost impossible. Here, as Bossuet remarks, is the malediction of the great fortunes; here it is that the spirit of the world appears most opposed to the spirit of Christianity: for what is the spirit of Christianity? It is a spirit of fraternity, a spirit of tenderness, a compassion which makes us feel the sufferings of our brethren, enter into their interests, and experience their wants. On the contrary, the spirit of the world, that is to say, the spirit of grandeur, is an excess of self-love, which, very far from thinking of others, imagines that there is nothing in the world but itself*. You find this fact discerned by men of observing habits, however widely separated from each other by opinions, nation, language, or age.

Bossuet, who preached to the court of Louis XIV., and Tiek, who enriches the German literature of the nineteenth century with characters drawn from nature, agree in this representation. "No, no," says the latter, speaking in the person of an aged recluse, "I have been young, and I have lived in the world, and I have not been always poor, as you see me now. No trusting the great, no connexion with the rich! They know not the love of God; compassion and mercy are strangers to them; egotism is their pillow, cruelty their bed. What should I do in the

* Serm. sur la Charité Fraternelle.

midst of such people? If I have long lived in this state, which you deem so poor and miserable, and found it happy, it was not to return to your equitable, wise, intelligent men, who always know how to find an honest and specious pretext for every shameful and criminal action. From the time that I first made acquaintance with beggars, I made acquaintance with hearts that my Saviour has touched. Leave me in peace to be poor, to be so poor as to be obliged to beg, that is my happiness and my devotion. My Saviour also had not where to lay his head. Almost all men think that they begin to live from the day that they acquire property. As for me, I lost and despised every thing, and it is from that time that I feel at my ease. Blessed Father Francis, and many others more, St. Roch, St. Alexis thought the same. It is already a paradise on earth to be poor, and to possess nothing. Ah, you worldly people! you know not what you renounce to be men of the world, and surpassing others in riches and dignity! To be humbled, prostrate in the dust, trampled on by pride, O that is the true happy state, the sweet solitude of the heart and of charity."

In this passage the authority of the seraphic father St. Francis is justly cited; for it is one of his injunctions in his first Rule to the Minors, that they should rejoice when they could converse with poor, miserable persons, infirm and abject, and such as beg by the way from door to door *.

Already, reader, you must begin to suspect that a wide distance separates Catholic charity, as taught and practised in the ages of faith, in all its views and principles and forms of development, from the beneficence of the moderns, wanting faith, which is found alternating so easily with riches and the love of grandeur; when even they who go before, the shepherds of the flock, extol advancement as a proof of merit, and when the multitude therefore, who see their guides strike at the very good they covet most, feed there, and look no further: and in fact, no estimate that you have formed of that distance will be in danger of having overpassed the truth. Perhaps my words may seem exaggerated to those from whom a new law hath taken memory and custom of love-tuned

* Cap. 11.

deeds ; but not the less will I affirm, that in no respect has the great moral revolution of the sixteenth century, styled by its followers " Reform," produced such a change in the ideas and conduct of mankind, as in that of their notion of poverty, and treatment of the poor. The work of sixteen centuries in their favour was broken up in an instant, though its fragments were only gradually consumed ; and that immense multitude of the human race was in a great measure, and as far as ideas respecting it were concerned, made to fall back to the place which it had occupied in the old civilization, before the poor had the Gospel preached to them. I say, in a great measure, for an exact return to the condition of the Gentiles, before the light of Christianity had risen, would, of course, have been impossible, independent of all religious changes ; but, so far as was necessary to constitute a total opposition to the spirit and manners of the Catholic civilization, the revolution, although gradual, was as complete as the most ardent political economist of the reformed school could desire. That it would be in vain to think of explaining the phenomenon which here presents itself, by alleging any change which has taken place independent of religious influence in the material condition of European nations, will be clear also to every reader who has an intimate acquaintance with the history of the middle ages.

In the third book we had occasion to notice the riches of the ancient Catholic states ; and here I shall briefly remark, that the population of those countries was then considered as superabundant. Leander Albertus attempts to account for the extraordinary inundations to which the Po had subjected Italy in the sixteenth century, by adducing the vast increase of its inhabitants. " I think," he says, " that one cause consists in the prodigious multiplication of the human race in these latter times ; for the plains can no longer furnish sufficient food for the population, so that men are now obliged to cultivate the tops of mountains ; and in consequence of their soil being thus disturbed, the waters descend more freely into this great river, and cause it to overflow its banks *." Setting aside therefore at once, as founded on error, the theories of modern writers respecting the causes of this

* Leand. Albert. Descript. Italiæ, 593.

moral revolution, let us proceed to view the facts which have been presented to the world at these different stages of its history. The ancient states produced slavery; Christianity produced poverty, in the common sense of the word; protestantism produced pauperism, for it was necessary to invent a new word for the condition of existence, to which the reformed system reduced that class of men, who in the ages of faith had occupied so eminent a dignity in the bosom of the Church of Jesus Christ. Under the system of poverty and Catholicism, the friendship of the poor, as St. Bernard says, made men the friends of kings, who deemed it an act not beneath their dignity to wash the feet of beggars. Under that of pauperism and reform, you may illustrate the proposition in the book of wisdom, that all flesh seeks communion with its like, by alleging the instance produced there: "quæ communicatio sancto homini ad canem? aut quæ pars diviti ad pauperem?" The pauper indeed plays as prominent a part in the drama of public life, as the poor man did formerly, but it is not exactly the same part. The pauper too falls under the observation of princes and nobles; and there are regulations also made in regard to him; but whether he is the object of that disinterested and personal affection, on which we shall find that the poor man in Catholic times might always reckon when he heard of the rich and powerful espousing his interests, is a question which, before we are at the end of the present chapter, the reader will be quite competent to answer for himself. At the first step one thing is clear, for evidently all the notions of men at present respecting the very mode and form of exhibiting mercy to the poor, are utterly unlike those which universally prevailed in ages of faith. Compassion was then to be increased by the presence of the suffering object, from which every one now endeavours to escape, like Agar, unable or unwilling to endure the sight of what would awaken pity, and seeking relief in flight, exclaiming, I will not see the boy die *. But moralists of the Catholic school remarked, that our divine Lord, who was animated with an ardent desire of suffering, acted differently: he approached the tomb of his friend Lazarus, and wept; he looked on Jerusalem, his dearly loved city, and groaned over its calamities. Jacob,

* Gen. xxi. 16.

they go on to observe, did not turn away from the view of his son's garment stained with blood. These were the patterns for those who were of the Mount. Thibaud, Count of Champagne, used to give shoes and vests to the poor with his own hand; and being asked once why he did so, he replied, that he chose to dispense them thus in order that, by giving and labouring personally, he might be the more moved to devotion and pity for the poor, and be disposed to practise always greater humility *. "God hath given thee eyes," says Guy de Roye, explaining the five senses of nature, "in order that you might look on others with pity †:" the last purpose for which modern philosophers would suppose they were intended; though in the divine oracles the symbol of mercy is the eye ‡: but these men have reversed every thing. Catholic charity is that which flies not from the view of misery and infirmity—which conquers the repugnance of sense by seeing only the immortal soul which suffers and is purified; the Catholic religion says, be generous, be merciful; relieve Christ in the person of the poor man, behold the sufferings of the wretched; and if the wretched do not come in your way, leave your way, and descend in search of them through penury's roofless huts and squalid cells. The beneficence of the modern systems requires no such sacrifice. To own all sympathies, and exterminate the insidious pride that waits on riches, to cultivate compassion in practice, not in fancy, to sit and smile with poor men, "to kiss salt tears from the worn cheek of woe,—to live, as if to love and live were one,"—this is not reformed religion, or law, the creed of those who look to thrones of earth for discipline. The modern beneficence has other ways; it sets out with the conviction of Chremylus, in the old play, that it would be doing the greatest good to men if poverty could be banished, for that is now the basis of all views of territorial improvement, so that the first step is always to weed out poor people from an estate; and it pursues its course in the spirit of his friend Blepsidemus, who exclaims, on beholding Poverty,

Ἀναξ Ἀπολλον, καὶ θεοὶ, ποῖ τις φύγῃ;

so that two men can be put to flight by one woman; for

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. lib. iii. x. 21.
† Le Doctrinal de Sapience. ‡ Cresolii Anthol. Sacra, 519.

to the eye of persons formed by the type of this age, indigence wears the aspect of that vengeful Fury, which poets of old represented in their tragedies, from which every beholder must recoil in dismay. All this indeed is expressed in measured language; but do I exaggerate in estimating what is at the bottom? The new philosophy says, "be humane, relieve your fellow-men, without distressing yourself; there is no necessity for your coming in contact with these poor things; it would injure society if the disgustful and distressing sight of abject misery were seen. There are always proper persons to superintend the wretched; keep out of their way; and if they should obtrude themselves on your way, let the magistrate be apprised, let him protect you, and let the inscription over the doors of churches warn all devout persons from bringing disgrace upon their faith, by giving alms to the wretched beings that encompass them. Catholic charity came by hearing, and descended by faith into the heart; it was the result of a conviction that the words of Christ in the Gospel respecting those who relieved and neglected the poor, would hereafter be fulfilled; it was essentially, therefore, an intellectual act. The bounty of men, who adopt the modern principles and manners, may be justly said to come in general by speculating or following the independent but capricious sentiment of a generous heart. Its effects, accordingly, are very different: with Catholics the giving of alms was an art, and, as St. Chrysostom adds, the most useful and precious of all arts. Whether it be so with the moderns, I will not pretend to determine; but in that event, it has certainly made progress in a direction totally new. Their beneficence has no resemblance to that charity sung by Fortunatus, and ascribed by him to Sidonius II. Archbishop of Mayence:

> Sis cibus ut populi, placide jejunia servas;
> Et satias alios, subtrahis unde tibi *.

as also to St. Nicetius, Archbishop of Treves, of whom he says:

> Dum tibi restrictus maneas et largus egenis
> Quod facis in minimis, te dare credo Deo.

* Gallia Christiana, i. 347.

It is rather that doubtful beneficence which is expected from flesh and blood excited, or the motives of secret vanity, which would be despised even by the Turks, who have a proverb never to trust men who are generous after they have dined, and which Aristotle and the writers on physiognomy in the middle ages would not have been more inclined to trust, who affirm, from what they think general experience, that merciful persons are pale of complexion, of phlegmatic temperament, easily moved to tears, and of abstemious manners. Michael Scot remarks, that their brain is of a frigid complexion, that they are easily alarmed, that their voice seems sometimes to fail as if they had a certain impediment, that their mouth is generally small, indicating that they are not formed for boisterous scenes, that they eat but little, that they are secret, modest, learned, and pacific *.

Cocles of Bologna, whose work appears also in the collection entitled "Infinita Naturæ Secreta," adds, "Misericors est sapiens, et disciplinatus et timidus et verecundus"—four qualities which seem the very opposite to those which fit men for making orations before large convenial assemblies, and for contributing to the excitement and imitative fever of popular meetings for banqueting and mirth †.

The charity which follows the new banners is all mixed up with pleasure and ostentation, either with dinners and rites that savour of barbarous buffoonery, or with the triumphs that suit pride's golden palaces, balls, fancy fairs, lists of subscribers, strange combinations out of common things, and inventions how to fleet the time in delicate accordance with the judgment of the world and a taste that guides a life of dissipation.

At Paris, in the fourteenth century, comedians were prohibited from giving plays during the time of collecting for the poor, lest the money of the people should be directed from them ‡; but the ingenious science of economy, in modern times, has enabled men to feel that they contribute to the support of the poor not only with-

* Michael Scotus, Liber Physionomiæ, pars ii. cap. xxxiii. xlv. lxvii.

† Magistri Bartholomei Coclitis, Bonon. Physionomisti Anastasis, lib. i. p. 20.

‡ Monteil, His'. des Français, tom. vi.

out subtracting any thing from their own usual amusements, but even in proportion as they multiply them; so that the most dissipated are the most merciful. But this adjustment of the difficulty, however subtle, would not have been suffered to satisfy any understanding, much less to tranquillize any conscience, during ages of faith. "Dead flies corrupt the ointment; that is," adds St. Bernard, "vanity, curiosity, and pleasure: and as these abound in the sacrifices of the Egyptians, we cannot in Egypt sacrifice to our Lord God a sacrifice of justice and charity. Therefore we must go a journey of three days into the desert; that is, into the solitude of the heart *." The two schools, therefore, are at issue: what the one denounces as a source of corruption, is recommended by the other as a vital energetic principle; and as it has pleased most governments of the north to decide in favour of the latter, the whole face of our countries bears testimony to the revolution of opinion which has taken place. Poverty and misery, nakedness and hunger, are as before, or rather, perhaps, such as they never were before; so that the senator now rises from the banquet, where discourse has turned on the state of pauperism, like him who, at his game of dice, hath lost, and, when all the company go forth, remains in sadness fixed, revolving in his mind what luckless throws he cast. But meanwhile nothing horrible offends the sight: the poor and squalid tenants of cellars are not seen; the naked and the hungry are not permitted to come within view of the privileged classes, pampered with rank luxuriousness and ease, whose delicacy would be shocked at the spectacle, or in whose breasts remorse, perhaps, would occasion uneasiness if that spectacle were beheld. The legislature and police have taken care to establish a better order; they have protected these voluptuous men from the stings of their own conscience.

St. Gregory Nazianzen, in describing the happiness of the poor in his age, remarks, that they who are not infirm run fewer risks of incurring fatal evil than the rich. "They move about," he says, "from place to place; sometimes they take up a position here, sometimes there; and they manage so well, that they find at length some soul who is ready to comfort them. They

* S. Bernard. Sententiæ.

sit down in the open squares and market-places; they address the passengers; they implore their assistance." They should not do so if our reform had extended there. Very different was their condition after the modern notions of economy had superseded the manners of the Catholic state.

Times there were, indeed, when a saintly silversmith like Eligius might entertain the poor at his door every day, and no other notice be taken of his custom, but by the inhabitants of the city saying always to those strangers who asked to be shown the way to his house, "Go into such a street; and where you see gathered a crowd of lame, and halt, and blind, enter, for there is his dwelling." But had a friend of the poor acted in the same manner after the establishment of the modern religions, he would have been denounced to the magistrates as injuring his neighbours, by rendering disgustful the public way; and though he might be a prince of the empire, he must either have caused the poor to forsake his gates, or been content himself to leave the city. Men who are duly formed to move in the modern civilization hold poverty to be a cursed, not a blessed state, and those who would adopt it from choice, to be mad, not holy. Where they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian. "Pass on, and come not near—put money in thy purse, or get thee to a workhouse!" is the only reply to the afflicted, who tremblingly make known their wants, and ask for pity in the name of Christ the Saviour. To a workhouse! The progress is not great from times when the reply was,

Οὐκοῦν ὑπόλοιπόν σοι τὸ βάραθρον γίγνεται *.

For what, if it be a stranger, that has no claim, as the world says, or even if the right be unequivocal, but the dejected being should be as gentle as unfortunate, and should have a mind too delicate to outface the scrutinizing look of humourists, strong in the might of office?—what if it be a maiden or a child, not necessarily insensible, or void of all the tender feelings of humanity, because poor and friendless? Can we then point with

* Aristoph. Plutus.

exultation at our legal statutes, and at the coarse dreary piles which furnish what they grant? Truly, in such cases, the difference may not be so very great between the pit at Athens, into which were to be precipitated those whom the law punished, and this new Barathron, into which are to be received those whom the law relieves, especially if we take into account the ordeal through which their discouraged hearts must pass—the bitter words and all the taunts which, from the prosperous, weak misfortune takes—before they can attain to the full enjoyment of the good things which strict law awards and aged sullen avarice pays. To a workhouse! —yes, holy Poverty, that is the word now, alike to thee, perhaps, accepting as a gift of God all humiliation; but I will add, hideous word! only to be equalled in deformity by the edifice on which it is inscribed, that doth the eyes and bosom fill with grief—barbarous title, which would as precisely designate a place not made for dwelling of the human kind, yet doubtless here pregnant with sad truth; for what are men, if only their bare wants are satisfied?

> "O reason not the need! our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
> Allow not nature more than nature needs—
> Man's life is cheap as beast's."

"There are persons," says the universal doctor, "who give to the poor what they would scarcely throw before swine, and yet think that they can redeem their sins thereby; and this is, as it were, blasphemy against God *."

Such men are never wanting; but what a contrast to all this will be presented to an observer conversant with the manners of Catholic ages in days of yore, as recorded in history? O God! how will such a person be able to convince himself that he is now in the same world, the same country, the same city, as that on which his memory dwells? Certainly, if he should attempt to describe the manner in which the poor were generally treated by Catholics in the middle ages, no man will believe his report. He cannot describe it without using

* Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. xxxiii.

terms that will seem to every one as exaggerated and poetical. All that he can do will be to invite men to examine facts, proclaiming things kinder and wiser than were ever said in human book—"except in Shakspeare's wisest tenderness"—invite them to see the palaces in which the poor were received in sickness, the cloistered courts which were built to shelter them in age and infirmities, the banquets which were provided for them in the halls of princes, the choice dainties which were reserved for them from the table of the nobleman—the sepulchres, on which tears of pity and abundant alms are commemorated amongst the highest graces of a king; as that of Louis VII. of France, on which we read,

> "Lingua preces vivas, lacrymas pia palpebra fudit,
> Pauperibus solidos officiosa manus *."

All that he can do will be to point out the laws, which, so far from subjecting the poor to imprisonment, on pretence of their presence in public injuring or offending the community, pronounce it an indictable offence to make any appropriation of the tracts of ground which in almost every parish had been set apart for their use or enjoyment, as may be witnessed in the petition against the Duke of Suffolk, for enclosing the commons of Melford †. The administrators, too, of these laws he may produce in evidence, some of whom, if possible, would have weighed the tears of the poor as more precious than all the jewels of a crown, if they had to make them restitution for an injury. With such recollections, is it wonderful that he should feel alarmed at the prodigious diminution of mercy which has taken place in the intercourse between rich and poor? or that he should be inclined to repeat to the men around him, and to himself too, that piercing reproof of a famous author, who may live to win back all his merits: "You say that you love your brethren—what would you do if you hated them?" Alas, where truths are diminished, how could mercy remain whole? In these limits where the feet of Christ's messengers once found no obstacle, such a growth has sprung of rank and venomed roots as long would mock slow culture's toil. Where is good Dunstan? where

* Ap. Duchesne, IV. † Hen. VI. 2d P. 1.

Elphegus, Anselm, Lancfranc, Ælred? Wonder not, lordling, if the poor do weep, when I recall to them those once-loved names,—Edmond of Abingdon, and Bede of Wearmouth, the hooded men of Glastonbury and Tintern, with Netley's cloister, and Croyland, each race disherited, and besides these, the ladies and the knights that visited the fatherless and the widow, and cheered to enchantment their afflicted hearts with love and courtesy. Look how the human breast to felness hath relapsed, from having lost correction! Talk of difficulties in the way of admitting the truth of Catholic doctrines! Hypocrites! Let them say rather the impossibility of treating Lazarus as their brother. Come, see the gates of these reformed Christians, forgetful of their old nobility, and the menial troop which hastens to drive away, with refined insult, the poor beggar whose sores the dogs, perhaps, were about to lick! There is a progress here. Dives could see a mendicant. Come, see the enviers of this new nobility, the masters of manufactories! See the active agents for preserving this social order perfected—the magistrates and overseers, the beadles and the bars of justice—and those sunk in grief before them! Come, cruel one! come and behold the children, slaves who must work sixteen hours in the day!—the orphan arraigned as a criminal for having prayed over her father's grave! Come and see the portals that refuse to open when cries of a woman in her last distress collect a crowd before them of such comforters as say, "How poor thou art!" and look upon the spot of mire where she does lay her burden down, with no heroic Bruce to shelter her! Come and mark these injuries, no longer strange, and thou mayest see what charity thy reformed creed hath nurtured! Come and behold what love is found among thy people; and if thy proud inventions needs must reign for ever, come, at least, and witness their effects! But, lordling, go thy ways; for now I take more joy in weeping than in words!

"Oh!" cries Tieck, on seeing the disdain with which the poor are treated, "I can fully enter into your feelings, ye holy saints, whom the world scorns and scoffs at—ye who did scatter your all, even down to your very raiment, among the poor, and did gird your loins with sackcloth, and did resolve as beggars to undergo the gibes and the kicks wherewith brutal insolence and

swilling voluptuousness drive the needy from their doors; that by so doing you might thoroughly purge yourselves from the foul sin of wealth."

It is not to be inferred, however, that the action of Catholic charity was incompatible with the regulations of a wise and humane police. It was a law of Charlemagne, that every seigneur should be bound to nourish the infirm poor on his lands, that they might not be obliged to wander elsewhere; though, indeed, express provision was made for the charitable reception of the poor strangers who might fly in troops from their country through dread of the Normans or Britons *; and in Rome, Venice, and other cities of Italy, we find at the present day spacious and solemn buildings on which is inscribed, "Pious House of Exercise for the Poor," or a text from the apostolic epistles teaching that men should live by the labour of their hands. In what is called the great school of charity, at Venice, you read, "Quid prodest homini si charitate hominem non alit? Charitas enim a Deo descendit." And again, "Venice preserves her dominion by religion, law, and justice—her subjects by charity and love."

Howard visited many of these Catholic institutions; and his description is not a little curious, if contrasted with what is found in countries that have adopted the reform of the sixteenth century. The great hospital for the employment of the poor, in the suburbs of Vienna, contained, when he visited it, three thousand persons. He says that the order, the cleanliness, the elegance observed there, cannot be seen without lively satisfaction. Indigence and old age, he adds, wear a smiling aspect here. Many of the inmates have attained the age of eighty. All the profit of their work is at their own disposal. You see cheerful faces on every side.

At Rome the hospital of St. Michael, for the same object, is vast and noble. Each person is instructed in some trade; and when a young man has attained the age of twenty, he is presented with a suit of new clothes and a sum of money to enable him to commence keeping a shop for himself. In the centre court is a beautiful fountain, and the chambers around it are appropriated to the aged and infirm. "In 1781, I beheld," he says, "260

* Capit. Car. Calv. Duchesne, tom. ii.

men and 226 women, enjoying here a consoling retreat. A vast table is provided for them, and they all seemed to feel and enjoy thoroughly the value of the succour which charity has provided for them." According to his description, the great house of correction at Ghent was conducted with such order, decorum, and religion, that one might take it for a college. In Spain there is such abundance of charitable institutions, that he says one finds few or no beggars. In the house of correction of San Fernando, which is at a distance of three leagues from Madrid, he found the utmost order, provision of excellent food, a humane and attentive governor to watch over the men, a matron to superintend the women, and a general discipline maintained throughout, which could only arise from the strict care which was taken to oblige every one to observe their religious duties *.

The confraternities of the middle age had enacted various wise regulations respecting the interests of the poor; but the persons employed in such offices were not hardened hirelings, such as would be deemed unfit, as Rubichon remarks, for the care of horses or dogs. They were the meek and holy, who voluntarily undertook the burden of such tasks for the love of God, and for which they could never have conceived that any one would think of proposing to them a temporal compensation. When the apostles were about to choose persons for the office of ministering to the temporal wants of the poor, they selected them as "viros plenos Spiritu Sancto et sapientia †." Such were the overseers of the middle age, if that term can be applied to persons who discharged an office so different from what the word is now commonly used to imply. Discretion was allowed to the rich, when there was a display of suffering generally exaggerated, and a wise police enforced by magistrates subjected them to no censure ‡. In fact, St. Bernardine of Sienna distinguishes a triple poverty, voluntary, necessary, and pretended, that of the poor of Christ, of the poor of this world, and of the poor of Satan, rich in avarice, poor in substance; to whom, as Hugo of St. Victor says, Christ doth not promise the kingdom, but

* Howard on the State of Prisons, &c.
† Acts vi. 3.
‡ Ligorio Theolog. Mor. lib. ii. 3.

hell *. And although the Church placed no bounds to her charity, yet the fathers of the fourth council of Carthage required that the Catholic poor should be more respected than others: "pauperes et senes ecclesiæ plus cæteris honorandi sunt †."

Thus, when money was given to St. Vincent of Paul, to enable him to purchase a horse, being resolved to bestow it in charity, the objects he selected in preference were the poor English and Irish Catholics, who had fled from the tyranny of Cromwell. "Alms ought to be discreet," say the ancient moralists; "we should give to the good rather than to the evil; to many, not to one alone ‡." St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, passing one day in the street of St. Ambrose, entered a house, where he found three poor maidens leading a pious, retired, and industrious life, nourishing their mother and themselves with the work of their hands. Being moved to compassion, he assigned them a pension; but after some time, hearing that they began to neglect their work, and grow dissipated, he returned, and remonstrated with them, and withdrew part of the pension, in order that they might be obliged to resume their honest employment.

A poor citizen of Florence going one morning very early to the church of the Annuntiata, overheard two blind men discoursing to each other on their respective funds, one of whom said, that he had two hundred gold ducats sewed within his cap; while the other replied, that he had three hundred similarly concealed in his cloak. The citizen repaired to the Archbishop, and told him what he had heard, who called the blind men before him, and reproached them with the injury which they inflicted on other poor men, and said, that henceforth he would support them as long as they lived, but that they must give up the five hundred ducats, which he handed over to the poor citizen, to form a dower for one of his daughters §.

Of similar discretion in the dispensation of immense alms, an example is found in the conduct of Diego Deza, Archbishop of Toledo, in the time of Charles V. In the first place, pitying the condition of reduced noble fami-

* De Claustro Animæ, i. 9. † Can. 33.
‡ Vin. Bellov. Spec. Mor. lib. iii. x. 22.
§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. liv. iii.

lies, he set apart one quarter of his own palace, in order to receive their children, that they might obtain there a Christian education at his expense, and under his own eye. Then, in distributing his riches to the poor, he contrived that each distressed family should be relieved; but as he did not favour idleness, he used to give corn to labourers, and tools to artisans, encouraging them in this manner to provide for their own maintenance *.

The amount of the alms of Yves Mayeuc, Bishop of Rennes, and Confessor of Queen Anne of Brittany, from whose charity he drew liberal resources, was not more remarkable than the discretion with which it was dispensed. It is true, in regard to his own wants, nothing could be less prudent than his bounty; insomuch, that his domestics were obliged frequently to remonstrate with him, and therefore he used to give much in secret, and to seize the opportunity, when his servants were not present, to give to some poor person whatever he could lay his hands on; but, in general, it was his custom to get the poor instructed in some trade. He kept in his episcopal house, and paid out of his own purse, a number of shoemakers, tailors, and cap-makers, who were constantly employed to work for the poor: he purchased the leather and cloth, and when the articles were finished, he used to carry them, in his own hands, to such families as he knew wanted them †.

Muratori evinced as much displeasure at idleness and deceitful mendicity, as he showed love for the virtuous poor. He obtained an order from the Duke of Modena, prohibiting any one to beg in the streets, unless furnished with a ticket, which was only granted by a confraternity of charity, after an investigation into the condition of the person who desired permission. In France, in 1493, strict ordinances were published against beggars and vagrants ‡; but this was at a time when the civil government was fast losing the impression which it had received from the faith, and when perhaps, it must be confessed, the principles of the Gallican schools partook in some degree of that severity; insomuch that the Sorbonne, when consulted in 1530, by the magistrates of Lille, decided

* Id. tom. iii. liv. 24. † Id. tom. iv. liv. 25.

‡ Ord. 1493, art. 55, coutume du Béarn, art. 44, coutume de Loudun, chap. 39.

that the poor might be forced to receive no alms but from the public fund, and the citizens restrained from giving alms, excepting to the public fund *; but the decision of such an assembly could not prevent men in those days from blushing at its practical inferences, for the force of nature is very great; so that the public mind was still sufficient to counteract the severity of any local measures of administration; for the rule of manners respecting the poor continued to be taught and practised in conformity with the spirit of the early ages of the Church, when a St. Hermas said, "Let your charity have a free course; give, give to all who are in need, without examining to whom you give; for God wills that you give to all; it is He who will demand an account from those who receive as to the use which they will have made of your gifts †:" and when St. Chrysostom had been heard to say, a merciful man is like a port for the wretched, which receives both bad and good. If you see one that has suffered the shipwreck of poverty, judge not his deeds, but show him pity; it is an extreme insolence to inquire with curiosity into the life of a miserable person, because, forsooth, you have given him a loaf of bread. Even if he be a robber or a manslayer, still ought you not to give him that much or a little money? Doth not your Lord make his sun to shine upon him? I beseech you, therefore, "let us do all things in simplicity." The spectacle of poverty was still deemed necessary to the rich; and, in fact, the giving of alms was thought to confer greater benefit on the donor, than on the person himself who received them. Had men contracted any guilt? They gave alms, and the tears and joy which accompanied the fulfilment of that duty, together with the prayers of the poor object, wrought a change in their hearts, and disposed them to receive the sacrament of penance and reconciliation. By sense of new light, the men who persevered in deeds of mercy perceived from day to day their virtue growing, and the circuit of their charity widening as they ascended.

The historian of the Dominicans produces an interesting example: Peter de Tapia, a Dominican, celebrated Professor in the Universities of Spain, and subsequently Archbishop of Seville, was sent as a missionary to preach

* Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. vi. 68.
† St. Hermas, Pastor Parabol. ii. Mand. ii.

through various provinces of that kingdom. On one of these courses he happened, when travelling in Old Castile, on the frontiers of Arragon, to meet the Duke of Medina Celi, accompanied by some gentlemen, and followed by many servants. This Seigneur saluted the strange friar courteously, without knowing him, and asked him where he was going. "I have come," said the man of God, "from distributing the bread of life to your vassals." "Then," replied the duke, "you shall dispense the spiritual, while I furnish the corporal alms, in paying all your expenses while you are on my lands:" so after these few words they parted, and each pursued his way; but one of the gentlemen, who had recognized the father Tapia, failed not to tell the duke that he was a man of celebrated learning and sanctity; upon hearing which the duke sent back to request that he would not leave the territory without coming to see him. This charity was the origin of the duke's conversion: the young duke, governing many subjects, was himself governed by his passions. Separated from his wife, he lived with favourites in dissipation and luxury, yet he possessed frankness, candour, and some generosity. A bad Christian, he, nevertheless, was generally considered by his vassals as a good master and good lord. As soon as the holy friar came to his castle, he opened his heart to him without disguise, and begged him to say how he ought to put in order his house, and the affairs of his state. The delight of the holy man may be easily conceived. The first change he effected was the reconciliation of the duke with the duchess: all persons who gave scandal were sent away: the duke laboured thenceforth to edify the people, and make them happy, consoling them in misfortunes, and defending them from all oppression. The benediction of heaven seemed to be manifested in the numerous offspring which were left, to transmit the titles of that great house; and the duke always ascribed his temporal prosperity to the charity which he had shown to the poor. The state of Alcala passed into his house on the death of the duchess of Montalto, without children; in allusion to which he said one day to the father Tapia, "Behold how God rewards, even in this life, the little service that one renders to Him in the persons of the poor." All that grieved the duke was, the resolution of the friar to accept not the smallest present from him;

but as he was resolved to evince his gratitude in some way, he assigned to the college of Alcala a certain quantity of corn every year, and gave the superior a sum of money, which was employed in decorating the church, and in publishing the works of Cardinal Cajetan *.

"I will say, my Lozenro, what I think; I cite the words of Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Lorenzo de' Medici: 'though it should seem an execrable saying, but it is true, and nothing is more sacred than truth. I will say freely then what I think. God, my Lorenzo, is venal; but with what money can the great God be bought? Ah, with that with which he bought others, that is, charity—with charity to the poor—for before Him we are all poor indeed, and He hath bought, He hath redeemed us. Let no one wise, or brave, or temperate, boast that he imitates God. These are but shadows of divine virtues. Only the man bountiful to the poor exactly imitates Him. O happy merchant, who, with a small price, buys both men and God †!"

It is not to be inferred that generosity to the poor was of itself deemed capable of atoning for previous acts of corruption. The importance ascribed to alms was carefully defined and distinguished. Liberal offerings were not deemed fruits by which the character of the donors could be known. The question was not, how much is given? but with what disposition is it given? Cornelius Agrippa, in his dark, forbidden books, treats on almsgiving as part of the purgation necessary for the attainment of an oracular mind ‡. Magicians gave alms; hypocrites and great criminals gave them; therefore the guides of the middle ages were wiser than those who now rest satisfied with a statement of the amount which men lay at their feet. "Let not sinners flatter themselves remaining in crime, with the idea of redeeming their sins by alms; for," continues the universal doctor, "alms are of no avail to obtaining pardon, unless by the intervention of penitence; although I doubt not that alms, and other good works, may avail towards their obtaining

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. v. lib. xxxvi.

† Mars. Ficinus, Epist. lib. i.

‡ De Occult. Philosoph. lib. iii. c. 56.

a conversion of heart from God *. To the living, a general consequence of alms was known to be an increase of grace. "Alms," says Vincent of Beauvais, "multiply spiritual goods, and enrich the soul; they multiply spiritual friends, and gain advocates in heaven." This doctrine was nothing less than part of the deposit of faith. Alms are termed by the fathers another baptism, according to the voice of Christ, Date eleemosynam, et ecce omnia munda sunt vobis. St. Jerome hesitates not to say, that the result of alms, springing from charity, is the same as that of baptism. "Such alms cleanse the soul as by an immersion. The fire of hell is extinguished by the sacred font, and the worm of conscience is destroyed by the pious liberality which relieveth Christ in the poor." Alms are compared, therefore, to the dove which Noah sent from the ark, and which returned to him in the evening with a green branch of olive; for in the evening of our days, as death draws on, and the deluge of sorrows surrounds us, this dove will return to us, bringing confidence, peace, joy, and immortal glory. Hence St. Chrysostom says, "that alms have wings, and that they confer the lightness and elasticity of angels †." As for the application of ill-acquired goods to purposes of charity, the Catholic religion can never be convicted of having sanctioned such an error. The ancient moralists show, that alms must be given in purity of possession, from one's own, not from another's substance,—that money acquired by unlawful means, and given to the poor, is not to be reputed alms, and that if one should give all that he has thus gained, he rather increases than diminishes sin ‡. Dionysius the Carthusian shows, that it is a miserable delusion to think of justifying plurality of benefices, by urging works of mercy; for that such alms, so far from being conducive, are injurious to the divine honour §. It was evidently the universally prevailing belief in the middle ages, that almsgiving would avail nothing when it was the fruit of oppression, simony, or of any conduct reprehensible. Legends told of men appearing after their death, complaining of the torments they suffered, and

* Alani de Insulis Liber Pœnitentialis.
† Hom. vii. de Pœnit. ‡ Spec. Mor. lib. iii. p. x. 19.
§ Dion. Carth. De Fonte Lucis, 1.

declaring that even their charity to the poor was vain, adding, "since our alms had been given from goods unjustly gained *."

Descending from Mount Gargano, where in the temple of the archangel he had spent some days, in a seraphic ardour of spirit, Matthew a Bassio, first general of the Capuchins, was received into the house of a certain usurer, in Manfredonia, who placed food before him; but when the friar beheld it, he exclaimed, "What do you offer me, mine host? Is this bread or is it blood?" "Bread certainly," replied he. To whom the man of God answered, "Not so, but instead of bread you are offering me the blood of the poor! Ah, cruel bread, steeped in the gore of the poor of Christ; who would not shudder at beholding it?" Then rising from the table, he rushed into the street, and proceeded to the gate of the hospital, where he besought a lodging. The host, terrified at the scene, like another Zaccheus, vowed instantly to make restitution, and from that day forth to renounce the manners of his past life †. But the source of bounty to the poor was not diminished by keeping it clear from all connexion with polluted streams. In these ages the Castellan, the knight, or even the peasant, might have used the words of Job, and said, "Si despexi pereuntem; eo quod non habuerit indumentum et absque operimento pauperem ‡." We find their zeal in this respect attested on their tombs, as on that of Evrin, Seigneur of Lagny, in the church of the abbey of Lagny, who, towards the close of a holy life, became a priest; for the inscription is to this effect:

> Qui pertransitis, si rem pensare velitis
> Hic faciendo moras, non incusabitis horas:
> Prudens, pacificus, qui presbyter unde pudicus,
> Qui nudo vestis, qui consolatio mœstis,
> Qui risus flenti fuit, et cibus esurienti,
> Hic situs Evrinus; meruit mundo peregrinus
> Nunc inter cives cœlorum vivere dives §.

Thus Spenser describes one whose mode of assisting

* Amalricus Augerius.
† Annales Capucinorum, an. 1552. ‡ xxxi. 19.
§ Lebeuf. Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xv. 35.

the poor, proves that the poet was familiar with the old Catholic traditions of manners:

> He had a wardrobe not of garments gay,
> But clothes meet to keep keene cold away,
> And naked nature seemely to aray:
> With which bare wretched wights he dayly clad,
> The images of God in earthly clay;
> And if that no spare clothes to give he had,
> His owne cote he would cut, and it distribute glad *.

Notwithstanding the number and magnificence of the religious edifices, which date from the middle ages, there appears to have been then but little occasion for repeating the warning of St. Chrysostom against the secret vanity, which prefers constructing material temples, to relieving the unknown poor in secret †. Truly, the Christians of those dark ages, as they are termed, will be able to remember, at the terrific judgment of Christ, having seen their Lord hungry, and having fed him, thirsty, and given him to drink, a stranger, and taken him in, naked, and clothed him, sick, and in prison, and visited him. Nothing was omitted that could tend to remind men of their obligations to the poor. In many states, as we still can observe in Italy, even the inscription upon the money comprised an admonition to give alms, and a sentence from the Holy Scriptures to that effect. The emblem of poverty asking alms, and exalted to heaven by Jesus Christ, was sculptured on the walls of cathedrals and abbey churches, under the form of a woman wearing a crown, and standing upon one foot, having the other, which resembled that of an aquatic bird, bent backwards as if in supplication, to suggest the word which, in the Italian language, signifies a beggar; for the subtle investigators of the Scriptures in these ages had remarked, that such imagery was in harmony with what had been of old ordained, when Solomon in the temple made two doors of the wood of olive, to signify the material and spiritual works of mercy, and also with the conduct of Christ, who chose to ascend from the mount of Olives, in sign, as they suggest, that alms glorify and introduce into the eternal kingdom ‡.

* Spenser, i. 10. † In Hom. 45. Matt. c. 23.
‡ Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. iii. 10.

The doctrine of modern political economists has yielded such a harvest, that men are found who avowedly disdain, through scorn of mendicity, to ask their daily bread of God as in the prayer of our Lord, saying, we must, by work and industry, create it for ourselves: but, however humiliating the avowal may be deemed by sophists, it must be admitted that the clergy of the middle ages sanctioned the idea that there was nothing in the act of supplicating his fellow Christians contrary to the dignity of a disciple of the cross. In Flanders boys used to be seen in the streets wearing an ecclesiastical dress, and crying out, "Date bonis pueris panem pro Deo."

At the castle, or monastic gate, on the bridges, beneath the stone crosses on the highways, at the portals of churches, and wherever there was a spot that seemed to have an influence of religion, there sat the mendicant, the wandering palmer, or the destitute wretch who might hope by looks to excite compassion; and in relation to art, at least, it is no great progress to perfection to have our streets and portals stripped of such figures as Callot represents, and insolent well-dressed proletaires demanding assistance, for the sake of propriety and the honour of a gentleman, in their place. The old painters are fond of these subjects; witness the picture in which we see a wall, through which is a small window with a cross over it, and the word "alms" inscribed, before which a crowd of poor persons, old and young, are presenting themselves, while a hand alone is seen dispensing alms. These windows can be remarked in most of our ancient buildings, though they have been walled up since many years. Neither can I discover grounds for believing, that in the moral order the change has been so greatly for the better, as some writers affirm. In Catholic countries, where the ancient manners and institutions remain, the poor are not that clamorous, obtrusive, and almost menacing race, which they are forced to become elsewhere. Dante represents them standing meekly in silence, and content to let their looks speak for them. All is peaceable, orderly, even cheerful in the group before the gate. Each waits for his turn, and seems as grateful to behold another receive alms, as if it had been given to himself; as if each followed the precept of the seraphic father, who says, "I return thanks to God that I was never a robber of alms, for I have always taken less than I might have had,

lest other poor should be defrauded *." Their looks and words seem to verify the saying of the same blessed man, that whether alms are granted, or cruelly refused, they return equal thanks to God; if granted, for the consolation; and if refused, for the occasion offered of merit and patience †.

We have already remarked that the charity of the great in ages of faith involved them in a personal and often laborious service. Meekness went along with alms; and it was not deemed sufficient to be liberal, if one did not follow the example of our Lord in condescending to the poor. St. Gregory remarks, that the ruler asked him to come to his son, and he refused to go in person; but to the servant of the centurion, though not invited, he promised to go in person. The Son of God did not wish to go to the ruler's son, but yet he was ready to visit and save the poor servant;—"memorable lesson," adds the holy pope, "to reprove our pride, which refuses to estimate men as men."

In the middle ages, great consolation resulted to the poor from the general opinion, or rather Christian instinct, that simplicity was an estimable quality in the great. Thus Helgald says of Robert, king of the Franks, "He loved simplicity, and he showed nothing but what was common, in his speech, walk, and manner of life ‡." The same virtue was ascribed to Charlemagne, and the epitaph on Isabella, daughter of St. Louis, particularly eulogizes her simplicity §. In fact, it was then religion.

In Catholic times, it used to be the darling recreation of a young princess, daughter of a king, child in heart as well as in age, to feign herself one of the poor, laying aside her royal state, and putting on a peasant's cloak, to walk amidst her young maidens of honour, pretending to beg, and like St. Elizabeth, perhaps, as if warned by a divine inspiration of the lot which Providence was reserving for her, saying, "It is thus that I shall walk about when I am poor and in misery, for the love of my God ‖."

The genius of great artists conduced to the same end. Of many it is particularly recorded, that, like Pietro

* Apophthegmat. B. P. Francisci, xli. † Sermo III.
‡ Ap. Duchesne, iv. § Id. tom. v. 443.
‖ Ct. de Montalembert, Hist. de S. Eliz. c. 8.

Cavallini, the Roman painter, they were the most devoted friends of the poor *. He, it is true, was a man of saintly life; but where could they find studies for the holy family, if they did not frequent the society of the holy poor? Independent, therefore, originally, of religious motives, it evidently entered into the habits of our ancestors, and even into their notions of enjoyment, to visit personally the poor. Only look at their solitary cabins, and at the picturesque site on which they construct them, and judge how interesting it must have been to persons who had minds like those of the old Catholic gentry, to know somewhat of the inmates. Here they knew they should find a form of domestic life very different from the monotonous and artificial society of the rich. The lady of the feudal castle, as well as the artist of Rome and Florence, had felt this in the days of her youth, and piety sanctified what a love for nature had perhaps at first inspired. That lady, when she retired by night into her secret tower, and heard the rising gust drive the large drops against the tinkling pane, would look in contemplative mood from her casement towards the cottage on the distant heath, that she had visited perhaps only some few hours before, and then she would indulge her fancy in conjecturing what were at that moment the thoughts and occupations of the poor, alas! so much more exposed than she feels herself to the driving of the pitiless storm; for she knows the peasants intimately for many miles about, and it discolours not the complexion of her greatness to acknowledge it. Amidst all the splendour of her rank, she cherishes a familiar acquaintance with the sons and daughters of the poor; and indeed these humble considerations make her often out of love with her greatness. She feels it no disgrace to remember their names, or to know their faces, or to take note of the devout prints upon their walls, of their furniture, their tables, and dressers, with all that is arranged upon them in such neat order; or to hear the inventory of their shirts or gowns, to know at what time she must send linen to one or warm clothing to another. She knows what sport amuses most the child, as if she were its playfellow, and what sayings are familiar to the aged tongue, as if she

* Vasari.

culled wisdom from it. She has often sat as a dear friend in the poor man's cabin, amidst the innocent group, round the blazing faggots gathered from her own woods; and not unknown to her are the simple profound sayings, the low muttered prayers, the strange old recollections, and the bright whispered hopes of the aged indigent creature who dwells like a recluse on the skirts of some wild wood or blasted moor.

The duchess, say the records of St. Elizabeth, used to ask the poor who applied to her, where they dwelt, and then no distance or difficulty of road could stop her. She visited the cottages farthest from the castle; she entered them with a kind of devotion mixed with familiarity, and consoled their inhabitants far less by her generous gifts than by her sweet and affectionate words. Often has she been seen leaving the castle loaded with provisions, taking precipitous paths to hasten to the huts in the neighbouring valleys. On one of these occasions, it is said, she met her husband in the woods returning from hunting, and that he saw a luminous crucifix over her head; which so moved him that he caused a pillar, surmounted with a cross, to be erected on the spot, as a memorial of it for ever *.

But to return to the mendicants and the wandering stranger. The seraphic father, St. Francis, said that the bread of beggars was blessed and sanctified by charity; it is holy bread, saith he, which the praise and love of God sanctifies †. "Cast your bread upon the passing waters; that is," adds St. Antony of Padua, "the poor who pass from place to place begging; and after much time you will find it—that is, you will be recompensed. Alms in holy Scripture are termed a sack, because whatever you put in it is found in the eternal life. Thou art a stranger, O man! Carry this sack on the way of thy pilgrimage, that in the evening, when thou arrivest at the hospice, thou mayest have some provision ‡."

I said that in the circle of the beggars all was fair and orderly; and sooth, whether you be an artist in search of forms, or a philosopher in pursuit of moral observation, you will do well to pause awhile and remark the groups

* Ct. de Montalembert, Hist. de S. Eliz. chap. 8.
† Colloq. B. P. Francisci, vi.
‡ Ser. S. Antonii de Padua, Dom. ii. post Epiph.

that gather before the door of the blessed merciful; you will see countenances among them that will impress you forcibly with the idea that they are those of living saints, of men of prayer and contemplation; and when they do speak, it is often to utter some affecting and piercing remark, or some benediction that sounds, even without attaching a supernatural importance to it, like a prognostic of future felicity An ancient author speaks of the impressions caused in the mind of a certain matron, from the reply of two strangers whom she found before the church of the martyrs, John and Paul, at Rome, and to whom she ordered her almoner to give money. They had only said, "Thou hast visited us, and thou shalt be recompensed in the day of judgment." Yet these few words were sufficient to inflame her whole soul with the anticipations of heaven *. Truly no one need be surprised at such relations, who has sat down in the circle of beggars in Catholic countries, amongst whom it might so easily happen that there would be a blessed friend of God. Uncharitable tongues encourage rich men to suspect these just ones who return to them more than Romeo did to Raymond Berenger. Aged and weak, the wanderer departs; and if the prudent did know the heart he has, begging his life by morsels, they would lament their stern severity.

Antonio Manzone, surnamed Peregrinus, of his own accord left his country when a boy, through love of the celestial life, and travelled over nearly the whole world as a mendicant, living on alms. He visited Jerusalem, Rome, Loretto, Compostello, and other holy places, with incredible labours of body, and returned to Padua, his native city, absolutely unknown, where he led a life of poverty and want, till, with weakness, cold, and fatigue, he died, and left a writing behind him by which it was discovered that he was of the noble family of Manzia of Padua †.

The scrupulous attention which every one evinced to give some gratification to the persons who applied to him for alms, might lead one to suppose that the Catholic rule was like that of the old heroic world, of which

* Vin. Bellov. Specul. Moral. iii. x. 21.

† Bernardini Scardeonii Hist. Patavinæ, lib. ii. Thesaur. Ant. Ital. tom. vi.

Homer makes Ulysses remind Nausicaa, when he entreats her to have pity on him, and adds,

——— σε γαρ κακα πυλλα μογησας
Ἐς πρωτην ἱκομην *.

To which, also, Sophocles makes Œdipus appeal, who, finding that he has first come to the grove sacred to the Eumenides, urges this circumstance as a claim to their especial favour, saying, "Since to you, first of all the land, I have bent my knee," or applied for succour †.

"Whenever you give any thing," say the writers of the middle age, "mortify not with harsh words. A sweet word excels whatever you can give; it is above all your other presents." "There are men," says Guy de Roye, "who are so rude to the poor when asked to give alms, that they even reproach them, and apply vile epithets to them before they give them relief, which is a great confusion. Such alms please not God; for one ought to give immediately, remembering what Seneca saith, that nothing is bought so dear as what is gained by prayers ‡. The king, St. Louis, and that "dear holy Elizabeth," who in a short life offered all that could adorn a Christian in a princess and a saint, had such a respect for the poor, that they never gave alms without kissing the hand that received them.

According to St. Gregory, compassion is more than a gift; because it is more to give oneself than one's property, for by compassion we give a part of ourselves—grief of heart. It was, therefore, the true Catholic mercy which Henry IV. ascribed to his son, saying,

"He hath a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity."

This was imitating Him who wept at the sight of Martha and Mary, in order, as St. Gregory Nazianzen says, that tears might thenceforth be laudable §. St. Chrysostom therefore says, that to weep, στενάζειν, is a noble kind of alms ‖; and notwithstanding the supernatural motive, humanity and pity were never to be wanting. Alms must

* Od. vi. 175. † Œd. Col. 85.
‡ Le Doctrinal de Sapience.
§ Or. 31. ‖ In Ps. 129.

be pious, say the ancient moralists, and given with compassion. We must be able to say with Job, "Flebam super eo qui afflictus fuerat, et anima mea compatiebatur pauperi *." We read, in consequence, that John the almoner always gave more to women than to men, on account of the infirmity of their sex. Those who give alms to beggars in the ancient paintings are always shown with kindly visage comforting them. "Nor do I mean," says St. Bernard, "that we should be without affection, and that with a dry heart we should move our hands alone to the work. I have read, amongst the great evils of men enumerated by the apostle, that one consists in being without affection †."

"It is a glorious thing to be able to make true friendship," says the universal doctor, "and the charity of Christians has stronger bonds than natural love. You have a friend, not who should visit you in sickness, console you in prison, but whom you should visit in prison, whom you should feed when hungry, whom you should receive when erring. If you love your poor neighbour, by that mere love you give alms; for the alms of the heart are much greater than those of the body; for charity suffices in alms without earthly substance; and that which is corporally given does not suffice, unless it be offered with a benignant mind ‡."

It is this tender compassion which characterized those men of eminent charity, Francis and Dominick; for the spiritual and corporal necessities of their neighbours did so afflict them, that they used to dissolve into tears when they could not redress them. "Send no one away sad," says St. Thomas à Kempis, "but dismiss them in peace and joy. Let them have what food and drink may be needful to them, and afterwards commend yourself to their prayers; and if you should add any thing more for their consolation, God will repay you §." The maxim respecting alms was that of St. Augustin: "Semper redditur et semper debetur ||." For, as St. Antony of Padua observes, with the ancient writers whom we before

* Vin. Bellov. Speculum Morale, lib. iii. x. 22.
† In Cantica, Serm. 4.
‡ Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. xxi.
§ Thom. à Kemp. Epist.
|| Serm. 26 de div.

heard, to give alms is an act of justice * ; insomuch that sacred scripture saith, "Defraud not the poor of alms." Guy de Roye says, that those who do not succour the poor according to their ability, will be guilty of homicide, if, through their neglect, any of these should die †. St. John of God used thus to call the poor his creditors. "Make friends of the Mammon," says St. Clemens Alexandrinus ; "a friend is not made by one gift, but by a long intercourse ; for neither faith nor love can be produced in one day, but he who perseveres to the end shall be saved ‡."

The guides of the middle age are constantly reminding men of the admonition of Tobias, to provide against the day of necessity; adding, that is the day of death and the day after death, when man truly wants mercy ; and as St. Ambrose saith, mercy is the sole companion of the dead ; therefore they conclude that it is great wisdom to give mercifully to the poor for God—that this is a wisdom not earthly, animal, diabolic, but a wisdom which is from above. Indifference to the poor they had so often warned them against, that they could not miss the scope at which they aimed. Indeed the homily of St. Cæsarius of Arles on the last judgment, which is designed to inculcate works of mercy, would alone explain the phenomena presented in the extraordinary solicitude for relieving the poor, which distinguished the society of the middle ages ; for then the inhabitants of every city, castle, and rustic village throughout Christendom, were accustomed to hear the same admonitions, not as inquisitive, to criticize a specimen of eloquence, or as well-bred persons to assist at a benevolent assembly with civil decorum, but as listeners attentive to a voice unearthy, yea, as those laid in the grave—their hands together clasped, while busy fancy conjured up the forms of Christ's terrific advent. After repeating the words of the gospel respecting the doom of souls, that terrible voice of our Lord at once to be feared and desired, he continues to address his hearers in the following terms :—"Who, on hearing these words, would not at the same time tremble and rejoice, since Christ promises to his servants a kingdom

* Ser. S. Ant. de Padua.
† Le Doctrinal de Sapience.
‡ Lib. quis Dives salvet.

—to sinners everlasting fire? Hear, I beseech you, dearest brethren, this lesson with your whole hearts! let it sink deep into your minds! For whoever receives this lesson in a teachable spirit, if even he be incapable of understanding the rest of the scriptures, may, by it alone, learn to do every good work, and to flee every evil one. Observe, then, what our Lord promises to say to those who shall sit on his right hand:—"Come, ye blessed! for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat." Whilst to those at his left hand he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed! for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat." He did not say, Depart from me, because ye have committed theft, or murder, or other deeds of the kind; but because from your substance ye have not given to the poor. As they on the right hand will be redeemed by almsgiving, so they on the left will be condemned for the neglect of it. He will not say to these, Come, ye blessed, because ye have not sinned! nor to those, Depart, ye cursed, because ye have sinned! but because ye have refused to redeem your sins by almsgiving. No man without sin ever did or can exist; but every man, with God's aid, can redeem his sins. God has said, "Whoever feedest not the hungry, and clothest not the naked, shall be sent into everlasting fire." If he is to be damned who giveth not to the poor, what shall be the fate of him who hath taken what is another's? If he is in hell who would not receive the stranger into his house, where is he who hath expelled the owner from his house? If fire be the lot of him who has not clothed the naked, what is reserved for him who makes naked the clothed? Wherefore, my dearest brethren, adhere to almsgiving, to works of mercy, which will not suffer the doer to labour in darkness. O soul, which dwellest within fleshly perishable walls, give whilst thou canst—give unto thyself from thine own substance! for fleeting is what thou possessest, and God offers thee a kingdom in exchange for thy works of mercy."

The holy fathers meet the objection which is so often raised against almsgiving by men who urge their domestic necessities. "Let us give to Jesus Christ the vestments of earth," says St. Cyprian, "to receive from him the vestments of heaven. Let us give the food and drink of this world, that we may assist one day with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, at the everlasting banquet."

"Da pauperi ut des tibi," says St. Peter Chrysologus, "da tectum, accipe cœlum." After repeating the words, "He who hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord," a writer of the thirteenth century exclaims, "O earthly and cupidinous sons of Adam! why do ye not attend? why do ye not negotiate? why do ye not lend on such usuries, without sin, and for an ineffable gain? Why to faithful bargains and to most lucrative markets doth the avarice of worldlings turn so deaf an ear, as if sleeping on the earth? Alas! to what Jew, to what sacrilegious person will ye delay to give little for much, a temporal for an eternal, a corruptible for an incorruptible treasure?"

The universal doctor had argued in the same manner: "O man! why seek to enrich thyself with that of which thy neighbour hath need? why appropriate to thyself what should be communicated to the poor? Dost thou wish to be a skilful merchant, an egregious usurer, a prudent mercenary? Give what thou canst not retain, that thou mayest gain things which thou canst not lose; give little, that thou mayest receive an hundred fold; give what belongs to another, that thou mayest obtain an eternal inheritance *?"

"But you will say," observes St. Cyprian, "'we have a numerous family, which prevents us from giving abundant alms.' Precisely the more children you have, the greater ought to be your alms. You have to pray the Lord for many persons; you have to efface the sins, to purify the conscience, to redeem the life, of many persons. Thus Job offered a multitude of sacrifices for his children; and the more numerous they were, the more victims did he immolate to the Lord †."

In the legend of the hermit instructed in the diverse and obscure judgments of God, the angel kills the child of the rich man, who received them to hospitality, and assigns as the reason, afterwards, that the father, formerly a man most charitable to the poor, had since the birth of his son neglected to practise works of mercy, and had kept every thing for his son ‡.

The Catholic rule, therefore, was, to give alms without

* Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. cap. vi.
† De Eleem.
‡ Guy de Roye, Le Doctrinal de Sapience.

fear of doing injury to others. "The beginning of avarice," says St. John Climachus, "is to pretend alms; but its end is a hatred of the poor *." And St. Augustin showed the groundlessness of such fears, demanding, "An putas qui Christum pascit à Christo non pascitur †?"

These sentiments passed current with the people, and gave rise to proverbial sayings in every nation, such as that of the Spaniards, "that to give alms will never lessen the purse." In the legend of John the almoner, we read of one who gave immense alms, from having found by experience that the more he gave to the poor, the richer he became; and ancient writers have taken pains to collect numerous examples in proof of the justice of this general observation ‡.

In the time of Tertullian, every one set aside what he destined to the poor once a month §; and besides contributing to this general deposit, brought his oblations to the altar. In the middle ages, the rule concerning the proper quantity of alms was reasonable and strictly just. We find it delivered in this manner:—"Your goods are either necessary to support your decent state in society, or not. If not, you are bound to give alms of them, even to the poor who are not in peril of extreme necessity; if they are, you are not bound to give alms of them so as to disable yourself from living according to the decency of your state, unless to poor who are in such indigence that notable signs appear in them of extreme necessity, either present or proximate; for to other poor you are held to give alms in time and place, so as not to derogate from your own power of living according to the decency of your condition ||." That this was not a dead letter is certain, for history displays it in action.

We read that William Ferrier and his wife Constancia, the parents of St. Vincent the celebrated Dominican, inhabiting Valencia, after their first dissipated years, made it a rule to give to the poor whatever remained of their annual revenues, after providing for the proper maintenance of their house ¶.

* Grad. xvi. † S. August. Lib. de Eleem.
‡ Speculum Mor. lib. iii. x. § Apol. 39.
|| Id. iii. x. 19.
¶ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. tom. iii. lib. 17.

In respect to the giving of alms, the Catholic society of the middle ages seems to have resembled, as far as relates to the external act, the people described by Thucydides, with whom it was counted more disgraceful not to give to one who asked, than not to receive after having asked *. We read, in fact, of many men who, with the bitter pang of self-remorse were smitten, and who did condemn themselves to severe penance for having neglected on some occasion to relieve a beggar. Hermann Barth, master of the Teutonic order, before his pilgrimage to the East, while almoner of the King of Denmark, in Lubeck, during a cold winter's day, had repulsed with harsh words a poor woman with her children, who sought alms. Soon afterwards, these poor creatures were found frozen to death. Admonished in a dream of the impending judgment of God, and terrified at the result of his own barbarity, he made a vow to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. There he was given an office in the German hospital, in which he so distinguished himself by his piety, his zeal for the poor, and his gentle solicitude towards the sick, as also for his valour in battle against the infidels, that he was elected master of the order †.

Such a case was most rare; but when an occasion of the kind did occur in ages of faith, the anxiety was not how to hush up the event as quickly as possible, and then banish it from the memory; for there entered too many elements of a religious nature into the composition of men's minds, when the doctrine of future judgment was current, to give much scope to the action of those prudential maxims with which the men of our days dole out their miserable pittance to the poor.

St. Francis of Assisium, in his youth, while following the trade of his father, having refused on one occasion, contrary to his custom, to give alms to a poor man who asked it for the love of Christ, was suddenly so moved to compunction, that he immediately afterwards made him a great donation, and promised to God from that hour never to refuse alms again to any one who should ask him. Pope Leo thought he had offended a poor man whom he found at his gate. Returning, he led him

* Thucyd. lib. ii. cap. 97.

† Voight, Geschichte Preussens, ii. 58.

into his private chamber, and made him lie down on his own bed *.

Justine, a Panigaleo, who had migrated from the Observantins to the Capuchins, exercised the office of guardian in the convent of Narni, before the building of that house was completed. It happened, one evening, that a certain poor stranger arrived there at sunset, and asked for lodging. Dominicus, a Buschetto, who had charge of the door, gave him a loaf of bread, but declined admitting him, on the ground of the building not being finished, and of their own great poverty. The stranger took the bread, and said, "I know that you are poor, but I am not ignorant of what you can do;" and without more words, turned his back and departed. This incident was sufficient to plunge the whole community into the deepest affliction. The porter immediately disclosed what he had done to the guardian, who replied, "Alas, my son! we have committed a grievous sin—we have denied lodging to our Saviour—we have driven from our gate the Lord of angels! Woe to us disdainful, ungrateful men!" and then he wept bitterly. During many days and nights he had no rest; for the words of the beggar, "Lo, I depart rejected!" seemed to sound in his ears, and he thought that he could never sufficiently lament having refused him a night's lodging †.

Eckehard the First, master of the school of St. Gall, in the time of the emperor Otho I., and one of the most learned men of his age, would not, on one occasion, permit a certain stranger to be ill-treated by the servants of the hospice, for pretending to be lame and suffering himself to be carried, when the discovery of his deceit was made by his springing out of the bath when the servants poured in more hot water instead of cold, on his complaint in Welsh, crying "Caldo," which they understood to mean "too cold ‡."

Every circumstance of human life, whether of joy or sorrow, triumph or adversity, was deemed an occasion that called for a distribution of alms to the poor. What generous liberality was evinced towards them by the inhabitants of Lyons during the splendid festivities in the

* Vincent Bellov. Specul. Moral. lib. iii. p. x. d. 21.
† Annales Capucinorum, an. 1547.
‡ Eckehard in Cas. S. Galli, c. 89, 10.

year 1559, which were celebrated in that city to express the public joy on the restoration of peace between the Christian kings * !

The custom of leading an ox through the streets of Marseilles, on the festival of Corpus Christi, and probably of exhibiting another in Paris during the carnival, however systematically perverted in later times, from the supposed discovery of its being a remnant of Paganism, originated in nothing else but the charity of certain pious confraternities, which had bound themselves at these seasons to regale the poor. Drexelius mentions an instance of a marriage feast at which three hundred poor persons were benignantly entertained; the bride and bridegroom serving up the dinner, and waiting upon them till the end of the banquet †. On any great deliverance we read even of the common soldiers giving up part of their day's provision in alms to the poor. The least circumstance was sufficient to touch the hearts of men of faith, and induce them to practise works of mercy.

Atto, bishop of Troyes, when sick, gave every thing that he possessed to the poor; and we have the letter which St. Bernard wrote to him on his recovery, praising him for that act of wisdom. "Above all royal treasures," saith he, "this title of poverty doth now ennoble and render you illustrious. Job is praised because he endured his losses patiently; and shall a bishop not be praised, who willingly gave up and liberally distributed? He did not wait till the hour of death, when he could neither give nor retain; but while suspended between the hope of life and the fear of death, living and willing, he dispersed and gave to the poor, that his justice might remain for ever; for it is more fitting that the priests of God should be clothed with justice than with gold or silk. O wondrous clemency of God towards you! He wounded the flesh, that the soul might be healed; he killed avarice, that you might live to justice ‡."

To mourners, indeed, belonged in an especial manner the duty of liberality to the poor. Monteil gives the narrative of a forlorn wanderer in the fourteenth century, travelling through a part of France where there were few towns or human habitations. "I walked," says the beg-

* Paradin, Hist. de Lyon, lib. iii. c. 31.
† De Eleem. pars iii. c. 7. ‡ Epist. xxiii.

gar, "slowly on, loaded with age and misery, and looked on all sides if I could see any Christian that would give me bread. Presently an old woman who had a goat that was grazing by the side of the road said to me, 'Run, run! the people of that great castle which you see yonder have published since many days, for three leagues about, that they give alms.' I hastened thither, and found that they gave two sous to every one; and the person who distributed the alms said to each one, 'Pray God for his humble servant, the high and puissant lord, the late baron, our master!' Such was the case when Louis de Sancerre died, who ordered in his will that the alms should be cried through the country for two leagues round. At the funeral of Pierre de Luxembourg, there were more than ten thousand poor, of whom thirty-eight were clothed; bread and meat were distributed to all *." At the funerals of the great, hundreds of poor men used to be clothed in black or grey stuff, who walked in procession with lighted flambeaux †.

On the death of Charlemagne, his son Louis inspected his treasure of gold and silver and precious stones; and after giving what was legal to his sisters, distributed all the remainder among the poor, chiefly widows, orphans, strangers, and indigent priests; giving all for his father's soul, and reserving nothing for himself but one silver table of a triple form, as if composed of three shields joined in the centre, which he kept for love of his father; and even this he redeemed with a price which he added to the alms for his soul ‡.

Nor was the distribution of alms confined to the days of burial, or those immediately subsequent; for it continued to be made on every anniversary, as is attested by many ancient tombs, as I remarked on that of Jerome

* Monteil refers to the will of René, king of Sicily in 1474; Mémoires de Comines; Antiq. de Rouen, par Taillepied, chap. 53, on the funeral of Georges d'Amboise; Testamentum Humberti II.; Delphini, Jean Chartier, Hist. de Charles VII.; Hist. de la Maison de Courtenai, par Dubouchet, giving the will of Jean de Courtenai in 1510; l'Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, par Lebeuf, chapters, Montmorenci, Ecouen, Louvres.

† Testament de Banduin Desplancques, in 1482, in l'Hist. de la Maison de Béthune; and the Testament of Jean de Courtenay, in 1510, in the Mémoires de Comines. Preuves.

‡ Thegani de Gestis Ludovici Pii viii.

Vignola, in the church of St. Julian at Venice. Thus, on each anniversary of Peter de Nemours, bishop of Paris, who died in 1220, there were always one thousand loaves given to as many poor persons *. The alms formerly given at Westminster Abbey, on the anniversaries of our different kings that lie there entombed, were very considerable; but what shall we say of those mites given every where by pious children, in every rank of life, when revolving years brought back remembrance of the day that a father or a mother died? "Ah! suffer me to mourn for my friend, the holy priest Francis Zaghio," says Bernardine Scardeoneo, in his History of Padua, "too soon taken from us by a premature fate. He was dear to me from his boyhood; and though in age he might have been my son, I not only loved him as a brother, but revered him as a father. His discourse was generally on the passion of Christ, and on works of mercy. Every year he used to celebrate holy rites, on stated days, for his departed mother's soul; and on these occasions he would afterwards invite a few of his friends, and place at the table twelve poor men—blind, lame, and beggars—whose feet he washed; and then, though he had but a slender patrimony, he used to give alms to a crowd of poor persons †."

The going on a pilgrimage was another occasion on which men felt bound to exercise more than ordinary liberality to the poor; for, in short, no pious practice of the Catholic religion was deemed whole and sound without the accompaniment of alms. Behold, for instance, Robert Duke of Normandy setting out for the Holy Land, with an honourable escort. "What tongue," exclaims William of Jumièges, "what words could relate the abundant alms which he distributed daily to the poor? What widow, what orphan, what poor person, was seen by him without being consoled at his expense? In fine, he arrived at the venerable sepulchre, in which had reposed the thrice holy body of the King of Heaven. What pen could describe the torrents of tears with which he watered this tomb during eight days, or relate how many presents in gold he piled upon it ‡?"

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 488.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patavii, lib. ii. cap. 6.

‡ Hist. Norman. lib. vi. 12.

Louis I., Count of Blois, who was so moved by the preaching of that miraculous man, Foulques, curate of Neuilly-sur-Marne, that he took the cross with Baldwin, Count of Flanders, before his departure signalized his charity towards the hospital of Chateaudun and the chapter of Chartres, as well as towards the monks of Val Dieu in that city *. St. Adalbert, of Prague, intending to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, prepared for the journey, not by amassing money, but by distributing all he had to the poor. Even a large sum which the Empress Theophania, consort of Otho II., then at Rome, gave him, he secretly applied to the relief of the indigent.

Above all, to penitents, bounty to the poor was an indispensable condition of their reconciliation with the Church; so that, as the historian of Bologna testifies, many cities of Italy felt the happy effects of the memorable year of devotion which saw the great movement of the pacific host, which Rainerio of Perugino, the blessed hermit, first levied; for of their repentance many charitable confraternities, such as that at Bologna, of the hospital of St. Mary, are standing monuments †.

When the Emperor Charles V. came to Rome, in 1536, his confessor Garsias de Loaysa took care to remind him of the injuries which his troops had inflicted on that city. Therefore, besides making great presents to every church, he left a deposit which was to be employed in enabling a certain number of poor maidens to marry, each of whom was to receive from three hundred to two hundred crowns, and also made a noble distribution of alms in every quarter of the city. His confessor seems to have been greatly moved by the cases of suffering which he then observed, consequent upon the sack of Rome; for on his return to Spain, being made archbishop of Seville, we find him sending to that city every year, out of his own revenues, five hundred gold crowns ‡.

Let us hear a late traveller's account of Catholic manners, in a country which had at that time escaped the

* Berniers, Hist. de Blois, 305.

† Sigonii de Epis, Bonon. lib. iii.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. 26.

influence of the modern opinions. "In Portugal," saith he, "marriages, christenings, and funerals, are generally followed by a liberal distribution of alms. The inhabitants of Lisbon do not fancy themselves contaminated by coming into contact with their indigent brethren, for whom they almost invariably show a friendly solicitude. They are not to be persuaded that there is death in the touch of the poor, or contagion in their shadows; they know them to be heirs of the same hope, and regard them as objects whom Heaven has surrendered to their bounty. Hence they have no surly mastiffs or pampered menials to drive the children of indigence from their doors. The Portuguese is never harsh to the poor, however importunate they may be: if unable to relieve the applicant, he conveys the denial with a kind look of sympathy. 'The Lord prosper you, my brother!' is the most usual mode of dismissal. If he accede to the request, his manners seem to indicate that it is an honour conferred upon himself. The general phrase is, 'Do me the pleasure of accepting this trifle;' when he respectfully touches his hat, and moves on. Instances of sturdy beggars are very rare, for a man in health scorns to invade the patrimony of the infirm. If compelled by distress to solicit relief, he will often check your liberality, by declining to take more than is requisite for his present support. From the earliest age, tenderness and solicitude for the poor are unceasingly inculcated. Children are generally the almoners of the family; and it is delightful to witness the alacrity with which they will break up their games and abandon their amusements, at the first summons to this important duty. Religion perfects what the habits of the nursery had commenced, and charity becomes blended with their very being *."

Do you mark, reader, how the manners of the middle ages have been preserved with the ancient faith; and how, under that blessed influence, the poor and the rich are every where the same?

In the ancient books we find ascribed to innumerable persons that trait which St. Jerome records of St. Paula, who used to think she had suffered a great loss, if any one else but herself nourished the sick or hungry poor.

* Letters to Osorius.

Damnum putabat, si quisquam debilis et esuriens cibo sustentaretur alterius *. During the famine in 1504, when the people of Lyons, and of the country around it, made such devout processions barefoot, imploring the mercy of heaven, Paradin mentions that there was the greatest emulation among the citizens to determine who would give most alms to the poor †.

We have before seen what care was taken in all ages of Catholic civilization to inculcate hospitality, as a work of the blessed merciful. Origen saith, "Let the old man run, let the old woman hasten, let the boy be active, let no one be slow in such works. O man," cries Alanus de Insulis, "if thou knowest thyself to be a stranger and a pilgrim on this earth, thou wilt not refuse lodging to a stranger; for if thou shouldest exclude the poor of Christ from thy roof, thou wilt exclude Christ himself from a lodging in thy breast ‡." A writer of the thirteenth century says, "Let hospitality be given cheerfully, and, above all, constantly; for let no one imitate the Jews, who in one and the same week received our Lord processionally into their state, and then ejected and crucified Him §." By hospitality is acquired the knowledge of God, as was seen in the two disciples going to Emmaus, who were illuminated not by hearing, but by entertaining our Lord, and also infusion of grace, as was proved in Zaccheus, into whose house, with the Divine Guest, salvation entered. At the gates of cities, in the twilight hour, might be often found gentle youths, deputed by their hospitable parents, to stand there on the look-out for strangers in distress, who courteously unto love's table bade the welcome guest. That hospitality of this kind should have been exercised not alone by the inhabitants of wild and unfrequented places, but also by the elegant and highly refined communities of Italy, in the ages of most perfect social organization, is a fact not a little remarkable. Ambrose Leo says, "that nothing gives such pleasure to the citizens of Nola as to receive guests ||."

At Brettinovo, in Romagna, a town beautifully situated on a mountain, the chief families, in the time of the Guido del Duca, sung by Dante, used often to have con-

* Epist. xxvii. † Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. c. 16.
‡ Alani de Insulis Sum. de Arte Prædicat. c. 37.
§ Speculum Moral. lib. iii. p. x. || De Nola, lib. iii. c. 6.

tentions with one another, when a stranger arrived, for the honour of receiving him to hospitality; to prevent which, in future, a pillar was erected in the market place, to which were fastened as many rings as there were fathers of families; and as soon as a stranger hung his horse's bridle on one of them, the family to whom it belonged claimed him as their guest, and entertained him with all honour and humanity *.

Every one has heard that when the friar Jerome Savonarola was preaching at Florence, vast crowds of strangers of all ranks came to that city, in order to assist at his sermons; but few perhaps are aware, that on that occasion these strangers were received gratuitously into the houses of the Florentines, several of whom, through Christian hospitality, used to lodge under their roof as many as from twenty to forty; and not only did they give them lodging and food, but these rich citizens used to wait on them with their own hands at table. Severe to themselves, and full of compassion for their neighbour, they revived the simplicity, innocence, and pious liberality of the first Christians †.

The ingenious delicacy, too, of the Portuguese was characteristic of Catholic manners, in relation to the poor in every country. That courteous style, which gave rise to the custom of dating letters from your house at Paris or Lyons, from your castle in Languedoc or Normandy, as if one gave one's own house to the person to whom one wrote ‡, was not confined to intercourse between equals and the great. "Those rich men are to be considered unjust," says Marsilius Ficinus, writing to Angelo Politian, "who instead of remembering God and the poor, call themselves proprietors of riches, when they are themselves rather the property of riches. On the contrary, they are just and happy who, amidst great riches, esteem themselves ministers of God, tutors of the poor, dispensers of riches. Fortunate young man, who hast found such portions! I had found such long since for myself §." In fact, to judge by the general practice, the

* Leandri Alberti Descript. Italiæ, 467.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 23.

‡ Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. v. 309.

§ Mars. Ficinus, Epist. lib. i.

villa or palace of a rich man was open to every poor youth of genius that required encouragement, and to every stranger whom sickness or calamity overtook while within the range of his ordinary alms. Not to speak of those who, like Piccolomini, Duke of Amalphi, and Count of Celano, did not rest until, through the ardent love of God and affection for his servants, they had wholly given their beautiful parks and gardens to the poor that sought celestial recreation *, it appears as if, in general, one might have gone to the house of the Catholic nobleman, in ages of faith, repeating the words of Socrates, when he invited Aristodemus to accompany him to that of Agatho, ὡς ἄρα καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἐπὶ δαῖτας ἴασιν αὐτόματοι ἀγαθοί; and if a sense of one's own inferiority suggested that they were not applicable, the custom of these times would have encouraged one to proceed without referring to the authority of Homer, who makes Menelaus a worse, repair uninvited to the supper of Agamemnon, a better man.

The Counts of Cortarodula at Padua traced their title from "the court of Rodulo," which was the term applied to the castle of their munificent ancestor Rodulo Valuasorio, at the village of St. Mary Nonio, in consequence of his generosity in receiving and nourishing there men of all ranks †. Andrew Doria received indeed as his guests the Emperor Charles V. and his son Philip Maximilian, King of Bohemia, with his wife, the daughter of the emperor; but you are greatly mistaken if you suppose that the poor, and men of humble rank, were excluded from sharing his hospitality. Those palaces which he erected with royal magnificence, those delicious gardens along the sea-shore and on the mountain, those painted galleys, which were the wonder of the age, were ready at all times to receive the poorest man, as well as the prince. "Never," says Sigonius, "was he known to show a different countenance to the great and to persons of the lowest rank; and not only his house, but even his bedroom, was open to every one who wished to speak to him ‡." In fact, these delicious villas of the nobles of

* Mutii Phæbonii Hist. Marsorum, lib. iii. c. 7. in Thesau. Antiq. Ital. ix.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patavii, lib. iii. 13.

‡ Sigonii de Reb. gestis And. Doriæ, lib. ii.

Italy and Spain were, from time to time, as the occasion might require, the retreat of the poor student, the garden of the poet, the convent of the monk, the desert of the hermit, the hospital of the sick.

St Louis Bertrand, an Apostle of America, being seized with his last illness in Valencia, the physicians prescribed for him the country air; and no sooner was this known than the Duke of Najarra, and many other nobles, disputed with each other as to which of them might have the honour of receiving him into one of their villas. The Archbishop of Valencia, Don John de Ribera, had the preference, and during many months he served him with his own hands, gave him the medicines and food at the proper hour, and said mass before him every day *.

Men of the middle ages might often be represented by painters in the act of imitating to the letter the good Samaritan. In the thirteenth century a nobleman of the country riding through a wood in the neighbourhood of Pavia, finds two youths, in the habit of St. Dominic, covered with blood, and stretched upon the snow. Alighting, he perceives that one of them is dead, and that the other has been grievously wounded. The latter he places upon his horse, and conveys to his own castle, whence he sends persons to provide for the burial of the other. Here, as if he had been his own son, he takes care of the stranger during many months; and on his recovery, hearing that they had been travelling to Paris, to study at that university, when they fell into the hands of assassins, he presents him with money to pursue his journey.

Every thing that could diminish the appearance of conferring an obligation, was carefully exhibited in the dispensation of mercy. Apollinarus, Patriarch of Alexandria, contrived to relieve the distress of a young nobleman, who had fallen into poverty, and in such a manner, that it seemed as if it was the young man who conferred a great favour in not requiring much more as his due †. John, the Monk of Cluni, who has written the life of St. Odo, the second abbot of that monastery, says of him,

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. liv. 30.

† Sophronius, Pratum Spirituale, cap. cxciii.

"that on a journey he used to ask the children and poor boys on the road-side to sing some ditty, in order that he might pretend to repay them with his alms *." The Abbot Leontius, in giving alms, used to place the money on the ground, or on the steps of churches, that it might not seem to come from his hand, but from the mother of God †.

Of Angelrann, the venerable Abbot of St. Riquier, in the reign of King Robert, we read, that as he was full of constancy and love for all subject to him, so he was also most compassionate to the poor. He used often to leave the monastery in search of people to relieve: he used then to carry with him a secret purse full of silver, and whenever he saw a poor man approach, he used to take out some denarii, and let them fall on the ground, and then he would call out to the poor man that he might come and see what was lying there, as if he were himself surprised. Then the poor man would say, "my lord, here is money on the ground:" upon which the pious deceiver would order him to pick it up, and take it for his own, as if it was, no doubt, prepared for him by God ‡.

The Universal Doctor is obliged to denounce a disorder incident to many persons, he says, in prayer; who, while addressing God with their lips, are all the while thinking within themselves how they may best give alms to the poor §. Although, probably, such a distraction is at present less frequent than in the twelfth century, when it is treated as a venial sin, I have myself remarked rich persons kneeling among the poor in churches, who used to take that opportunity of dropping pieces of money into their caps, or upon their jackets which lay beside them, and thus leaving them to wonder at the unexpected grace.

St. Gregory Nazianzen praises his father for having given to his mother the whole administration of the money which he set apart for bounty, chiefly in order that the praise might not redound upon himself. The father of St. Catherine of Sienna having given her full

* Bibliothec. Cluniacen. 33. † Id. cap. lxi.

‡ Chronic. Centulens. sive S. Richarii, lib. iv. cap. 8. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

§ Alani de Insulis Sententiæ.

liberty to dispense his alms, she used to search out families that were in secret distress, and while sick and weak herself, used to carry out early in the morning loads of corn, wine, oil, and other provisions, and contrive to introduce them into the houses of some widow or poor person, who was ashamed to ask alms, and having deposited them behind the door, would then make her escape unseen *. Every land, in short, could tell of some subtle act of mercy, which, in respect to the delicacy of the spirit that dispensed it, resembled the gift of Nicholas,

> Which on the maidens he
> Bounteous bestow'd, to save their youthful prime
> Unblemish'd †.

The chief public provision for the poor in ages of faith consisted in the property of the church. By the canons of the Council of Orleans, in the year 511, a third part of the offerings to the church are given to the bishop, with an injunction that he must provide for the poor and the sick; and by the Council of Tours, in 567, it is ordained, that cities, and priests residing in the country, should nourish their respective poor, in order that these may not be obliged to remove to other places. By the canons of the Council of Clermont, in 549, it is ordered that the bishop who shall hear of there being any lepers on his territory, or in the city, must furnish them with all that is necessary.

Having already had occasion, while illustrating from history the justice of the ecclesiastical order in the middle ages, to enter into many details respecting its pious liberality, there would be at present but little to add on the subject of episcopal and monastic charity, if it were not that the object on which our attention is at present immediately fixed seems to require that we should produce some instances. We observed, that in this great work of providing for the wants of the poor, the Roman Pontiffs set an example to the world, which the Universal Church was not slow to follow. The names of Silvester I., Gregory the Great, Urban I., Leo IX., Alexander V., Innocent III., Boniface V., Adrian I., Gregory XIII.,

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 14.

† Dante, Purg.

Clement VIII., Pius V., and numerous other Pontiffs on that supreme chair, must be for ever associated in the human memory with the idea of charity and munificence in the utmost perfection and degree. In the archives of Rome there is a book still extant filled with the names of those who, in Rome and in many other places, received alms from St. Gregory the Great, for he sent money to the poor of distant cities, as to those of Jerusalem, where he also founded an hospice *. So great was the liberality of Alexander V. to the poor, that he used to subtract sometimes from his daily bread to give to them, and in allusion to the effects, he used to say, "I was a rich bishop, a poor cardinal, and now I am a mendicant pope." Yet this does not prevent historians from affirming, that the riches of the Roman Church were acquired by means of her charity and alms †. During a season of scarcity Innocent III. provided for every distressed person in Rome. Those who were ashamed to make known their poverty received assistance secretly, and others, to the number of 8000, received provisions daily. "What money he expended in this work," says an ancient writer, "He knoweth, from whom nothing is hidden." During his pontificate he employed the tenth of his revenues in alms, besides other immense sums, and all oblations received at his feet. His almoner went about in search of poor and infirm persons, and to such as were noble he gave seals, so that the persons who brought them received money every week for their support. The same benignant pontiff, in a spirit of Catholic simplicity, used to suffer poor boys to come before his table at the end of his repasts, and receive the food that remained on it; and every Saturday he used to wash and kiss the feet of twelve poor persons, and give money to each ‡.

"O what was the grief of all men," cries Hugo, bishop of Ostia, describing the death of Eugene the Third to the chapter of Citeaux. "What especially were the lamentations of widows and orphans! you would say that he must be already with God who is so lamented by the people §. Such was the type of all ecclesiastical princes.

* Drexelius de Eleemosyna, i. 4.
† Drexelius de Eleem. Pars iii. c. 5.
‡ Gesta Innocentii III. 143.
§ Epist. S. Bern. ccccxxxvii.

If you ask to behold the treasures of the Church, she presents to you the poor; if you inquire into her means of defence, it is again to the suppliant poor that you are referred. "The prayers of the poor are my defence," said St. Ambrose to the emperor; "those blind, those lame, those aged persons, are more powerful than the stoutest warriors *." If you inquire to what end the Church has been endowed with wealth and property, you are told that it is to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and, according to the necessities of time and circumstance, to relieve the poor of Christ. The prodigious alms of the church of Toledo to the poor, who were ashamed to beg, are described by the old Spanish historians †, while modern writers only descant on its grandeur and its privileges; and what think you, reader, were those of York, and Canterbury, and Durham, and those other English sees, whose bounty to the just and needy is gone by, not through their fault, but his who first taught kings, with impious and insane violence, to abolish the discipline of Rome? Bartholomew de Martyribus indeed lamented the disposition of those who first introduced splendour into the archiepiscopal palace at Bragua, in which he would only occupy a small room, which he fitted up like a cell; yet these palaces were built by holy men of charity, with the express view, it is said, of leaving no pretence to successors for not residing, or for not being bountiful to God's poor. If you are led at moments to feel surprise at the magnificence of the episcopal state in the middle ages, your suspicions and jealousies are quickly dissipated when you find that the feast is for the hungry, the delicacies for the lame and the blind. "Largus muneribus, sibi parcus," say the biographers of Gui de Sulley, Archbishop of Bourges in the thirteenth century ‡. And this is the testimony in most cases. When St. Ansbert, Abbot of Fontanelle, made his first entry into Rouen, as bishop of that see, in the seventh century, and a grand entertainment was given to persons of all classes, we read that the largest table was for the poor, and that the prelate having caused every one to be placed according to his rank, then seated himself among

* Serm. de Basil., non trad.
† Lucii Marinei Siculi de Reb. Hispaniæ, lib. ii.
‡ Gall. Christ. tom. i.

the poor *. You find the same usage after a lapse of eight centuries, when Yves Mayeuc, Confessor of Queen Anne of Brittany, made his first entry into Rennes, after being consecrated bishop of that see, for he ordered the gates of his palace to be opened, and a table to be provided during many days, not alone for the canons and great men of the city, but for all the poor, on whom he waited with his own hands †. Carsias de Loaysa, Archbishop of Seville, gave a fund to supply 1000 ducats every year for marriage portions to poor orphan maidens of the city of Talavera ‡. It is highly curious to compare the constant zeal in this respect, and the corresponding deeds of men who are accused by the modern teachers of "forbidding to marry," with the theories and deeds of the same teachers, who seem to regard the marriage of the poor as detrimental to the state, and who are actually in some countries enforcing measures, which when practised by the Spaniards upon the Indians in America, were denounced by the Dominican friars to the government of Spain as incompatible with the profession of Christianity. Certainly the contrast is most singular, and if it were only as a lively remark, I am surprised that our contemporaries have not indulged in it, though even at the risk of placing their own guides in an unenviable position. A few instances will show what kind of evidence Catholicism can produce here. Let us note some.

Pius V. signalized the first years of his pontificate by giving marriage portions to an immense number of poor maidens. Prodigious sums, for the same purpose, were given by Peter de Tapia, Bishop of Segovia, and by other Spanish prelates. Louis de Vervens, Archbishop of Narbonne, used to give every year 12,000 livres, in marriage portions, to the poor maidens of that city and diocese; and he provided that the same sum should be similarly paid for ever §. Cardinal John de Torquemada, Master of the Sacred Palace, whose works of mercy entitle him to as much renown as his learned writings in defence of the faith, besides giving prodigious alms to the poor, founded, in 1460, in the Dominican convent of the Mi-

* Aigrad. Vita S. Ansberti apud Bolland. ad 9 Feb.
† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. iv. 25.
‡ Id. iv. 26.
§ Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 393.

nerva at Rome, a congregation charged with giving a dower every year to twelve poor maidens, on the festival of the Annunciation. Such was the origin of this celebrated confraternity, which was afterwards so much enriched by sovereign pontiffs, cardinals, Roman princes, and nobles, that after three centuries, it was able to give every year sixty Roman crowns, and a dress of white serge, to more than 400 maidens. Pius V. gave 5,000 gold crowns to its fund. So greatly was this establishment esteemed by the popes, that they always went in cavalcade, accompanied by the cardinals and the Roman nobility, in order to distribute with their own hands the tickets to those who were to receive them *. Innumerable were the young persons whom the charity of Thomas Carbonel, Bishop of Siguença, enabled to marry, and establish themselves with decency. How affecting must it have been to behold the 2,000 children, who came amidst all the inhabitants of Siguença, to welcome back this holy prelate, when he returned to them after his absence at the court of Charles II. to whom he had been appointed confessor, and from which he could only get permission to depart by appealing to the canons of the Church, and to Pope Innocent XI †. Nicholas Albergatus, Bishop of Bologna, gave up all his episcopal revenues, retaining only what was necessary for his own subsistence, in order chiefly to give marriage portions to poor maidens, and the remainder he employed in supporting learned men ‡. Such importance was attached to charity in this form, that by the canon laws the goods of a fraternity, founded for the purpose of enabling poor persons to marry, could not be alienated without solemnities §. These Roman priests, "who forbid men to marry," take very strange measures, methinks, to secure obedience and accomplishment of prophecy. But let us mark the more ordinary course of episcopal mercy to the indigent.

Maurice, Archbishop of Rouen, who had owed his education to the charity of a convent, when elected Arch-

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iii. liv. 21.

† Id. tom. v. lib. 39.

‡ Sigonii de Ep. Bonon. lib. iv.

§ Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miser. Person. 244.

bishop in 1231, finding that the annual income amounted to 12,000*l.*, gave orders that the expense of his family should never exceed 3000, and that all the rest should be given to the poor, as to the rightful owners *. Simon Salterrelli, Archbishop of Pisa in 1323, chose four ancient inhabitants of that city, on whose probity and experience he could rely, and charged them with the office of selecting the best objects for his alms. By their hands he gave the greatest part of his revenues, and even of other personal property which devolved upon him, to widows, orphans, and ruined families, who, through delicacy, could not make known publicly their distress †. St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, gave orders to his servants that no poor person should ever be sent away empty handed. He was reduced sometimes to the necessity of selling his furniture, and even his clothes, to meet the demands of his charity. He had no horses, and one mule sufficed for his service, and he sold this animal to give the price to the poor, but it was purchased by a rich citizen of Florence, who did not fail to send it back as a present to the Archbishop. Notwithstanding this continual expenditure he was able to make a permanent foundation for the relief of poor families that were ashamed to ask alms, in the college of St. Martin, in which he established twelve administrators, and which prospered so well, that when Touron wrote his History, it used to support 600 poor families. On founding this college the saint observed, that he was working for some families which were then rich, but which would one day be in distress; and the event verified his prediction. The charity of Cardinal Orsini, when Archbishop of Beneventum, was so prodigious on the two memorable occasions when the city was reduced to a heap of ruins by earthquakes, that he deserved to be styled its second founder. In the space of thirty-five years he spent there, in works of mercy, the sum of 698,593 ducats ‡. This reminds one of what is related of St. Charles Borromeo, that in a few days he distributed to the poor of Milan 60,000 gold crowns. Touron proposes the question, whence did they derive such immense funds? and he shows, as in the instance of the Archbishop of Beneventum, that they

* Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miser. Person. I. 586.

† Touron, tom. ii. liv. xi. ‡ Italia Sacra, tom. viii.

were enabled to effect this by the riches of their own family, the revenues of their see, and, above all, by a wise economy and an extreme frugality, for they both lived absolutely as penitents, and their servants were content with necessaries *.

Peter de Tapia, a Dominican, Bishop of Siguenza, in the time of Philip IV., gave a memorable example of mercy to the people of his diocese; for in order to defray the expenses of a war, the minister had imposed a tax upon them, which the majority were unable to pay in money, and the government required them to give their corn and oats instead of it. The bishop was greatly moved at the view of their sufferings, and indignant at the severity with which Antony de la Tour collected the money. He resolved, therefore, to take the whole payment on himself. The king wrote to thank him for his liberality to the poor; but the bishop, on placing the sum in the hands of the collector, said to that officer, "You will do well, sir, to learn in future to command your temper. I am sorry you are going to the army, for ill will befall you there." The bishop said no more. Antonio departed, and after a short time, falling into a dispute, drew his sword against a general, and suffered death for that offence by the hands of the executioner †.

Although it would be endless to enumerate instances of episcopal charity to the poor on ordinary occasions, I cannot refrain from adding to the examples already cited the name of Dominick de Marinis, Archbishop of Avignon. He was of a family that had been long celebrated for its mercy to the indigent. His mother, Theodora Justiniani, was styled by St. Philip Neri, a person of all goodness, in consideration of her alms; and his father, the Marquis of Bomba, in the kingdom of Naples, not content with imitating her in that respect, wrote a dialogue to excite the pity of the faithful to have compassion on the poor of Jesus Christ. Touron says, that it would require a volume to describe the charitable acts of the Archbishop, into whose palace the poor used to enter as if it was their own home.

In the middle ages no vastness of enterprize, or splen-

* Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. vi. liv. 43.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. liv. 36.

dour of works, seem to have interfered with the discharge of episcopal mercy to the wretched. The present beautiful cathedral of Sienna owes its plan and commencement to Thomas de Berta, bishop of that see, who assigned for the work great sums from its revenues, and who is precisely a prelate distinguished in the history of his order for the profusion of his alms to the poor *. On occasions of public calamity the service rendered by ecclesiastics would seem almost incredible, if it were not so well attested.

Walter de Sufield, Bishop of Norwich in the thirteenth century, at whose tomb so many miracles were wrought, in a year of famine sold all his plate, and distributed every pennyworth among the poor. In the year 1788 De Juigné, Archbishop of Paris, gave 300,000 francs to the poor; and in the same year the Curate of St. Roch, in that city, gave to them 200,000 francs. After the troubles which afflicted Genoa, in the year 1295, the celebrated Archbishop James de Voragine gave up all his rich revenues to relieve the wants of the citizens: he sold even his furniture to give the money to the poor. An ancient writer records, that to the hospitals alone he gave as much as would have almost exhausted the resources of a king †.

When St. Thomas of Canterbury began to discharge the archiepiscopal functions, much of his time was occupied in deeds of mercy, in visiting the sick, relieving the poor, and ministering in the hospitals: daily on his knees he washed the feet of thirteen beggars, and gave to each four pieces of silver. The episcopal charity never failed, even where the means might have been supposed wanting to give it effect. St. Martin one day going to church met a poor man naked, and ordered his archdeacon to buy instantly a vest for him; and as he delayed doing it, he took off his own in the sacristy, and gave it to the poor man; and when the archdeacon soon after came to press him to leave his prayers, and go into the church to say mass, he told him that he must first purchase a vest for him. Thus compelled by necessity, the archdeacon went out, and for five pieces of silver bought a shaggy

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 3.

† Idem. liv. 6.

tunic, that had been made two years, which blessed Martin put on, and when he raised the Lord's body at the altar his arms were seen naked *. Pope Gregory finding a poor man who had suffered shipwreck, and not having any thing else at hand, gave him a silver dish full of vegetables, which had been sent to him by his mother. St. Germain of Auxerre, on his return from Rome, going out of Milan, desired to give all that he had to the poor; and inquiring from his deacon if he had done so, found remaining only three denarii, which he then gave, saying to the murmuring attendant, "God has enough to feed his servants this day;" and in fact they had not proceeded far when the servant of a rich nobleman came up, and presented them with 200 solidi from his master †. Marc Antonio Bizzonio, Bishop of Fulginas in 1586, was proposing to set out for Rome. to visit the threshold of the Apostles, when in the act of proceeding forth, a certain nobleman fell on his knees, and besought his charity, confessing that he and his family were almost in despair through poverty. The bishop, shocked at such a recital, broke off his journey, and gave the money which it would have cost him to this distressed family ‡. When Augustin Justiniani, one of the great scholars of that period, was appointed by Leo X. to the see of Nebbio, in Corsica, on arriving in that island he found the number of poor persons so great that his means did not suffice to relieve them. But this bishop of a poor see was determined that the fruits of his learning should make amends, and for this purpose he published, with notes, two thousand and fifty copies of the Psalter, in five languages, of which he was master, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Chaldaic, and Latin; finally, this illustrious scholar abandoned all the honours and advantages that were offered to him by the learned world,—at Paris, when he was almoner to Francis I., at London, where he was received by Sir Thomas More, at Rome, where the treasures of the Vatican must have possessed such attractions for him, in order to pass the rest of his life in his poor diocese on that island, while returning to which, in 1536, after a short absence at Genoa, where domestic affairs had required his pre-

* Vincent. Bellov. Speculum Moral. lib. iii. pars x. dist. 21.
† Idem.
‡ Italia Sacra, tom. i. 716.

sence, he perished in a tempest *. Gilles Foscharari, Bishop of Modena, in the sixteenth century, more than once pledged his episcopal ring and crosier, in favour of those whose distress he could not otherwise instantly relieve. The habit of St. Dominick or of St. Francis, which these men generally persisted in wearing, was, it is true, dearer to their hearts than the insignias of their ecclesiastical authority.

Had we permission to wait until more of these men of mercy passed, we might behold an Ives, who never thought that he had dined or supped unless he had entertained some poor man or stranger at his table, a Laurence, Archbishop of Dublin, in whose presence as many as sixty poor persons dined daily, an Anno, Archbishop of Cologne, in whose palace twenty-four poor men dined every day, and a multitude received alms, a Godefrid, Bishop of Amiens, who waited every day on thirteen beggars, for whom a table was prepared, a Cardinal Bellarmin, who when Archbishop of Capua, could sometimes hardly penetrate into his own house, such a crowd of poor persons pressed round the gates, all of whom received relief, who, after the example of Pope Pius V. refused to have any fire in his chamber in the severe winter months, in order that the price of the wood might be given to the poor.

But such details are interminable; let us be content with a hasty visit to the tombs of bishops, which often attest, with impressive simplicity, how well they discharged that duty of their high office. The epitaph on Leontius senior, Archbishop of Bourdeaux, was written by Fortunatus:

Quem plebs cuncta gemens confusâ voce requirit,
Hinc puer, hinc juvenis deflet, et inde senes.
Nemo valet siccis oculis memorare sepultum
Qui tamen in populo vivit amore pio.
Ecclesiæ totum concessit in ordine censum,
Et tribuit Christo quod fuit ante suum.
Ad quem pauper opem, precium captivus habebat,
Hoc proprium reputans quod cupiebat egens †.

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv. liv. 25.

† Lib. iv. c. 9.

The same poet had described the charities of Charentinus, Archbishop of Cologne, in verses, which were afterwards placed upon his tomb.

Si videas aliquos quacunque ex gente creatos
Quamvis ignotos, mox facis esse tuos.
Pectora cunctorum reficis dulcedine verbi,
Lætificas vultu tristia corda tuo.
Pauperibus cibus es, sed et esurientibus esca,
Rite pater populi, dando salutis opem *.

In short, it is the common praise of all these Catholic prelates, as it had been of the Apostles, "that they were mindful of the poor."

From a consideration of these facts, it is not strange that some men should still be found to raise an energetic cry against the projected spoliations of ecclesiastical property; and as, in the instance which has lately occurred of a Spanish writer, to declare, although with a conviction of speaking to deaf ears, that in seizing the property of the Catholic Church, legislators are robbing the people of their best inheritance. "Politicians," saith this Spaniard, "who declaim against the riches of the clergy, do not consider the advantage that society derives from it. They would not wish to annihilate the patrimony of the poor of Christ, which is administered by the majority of the clergy with probity and exactness, if they would compare the amount of the property of the Church, her expenses and economy, with the immense patrimony of our grandees, their dissipation, and their alms. Allow the clergy to be despoiled of their revenues, and the streets will be filled with ghastly objects, houses will resound with the mournful cries of orphans and widows famishing with hunger, and the roads will be infested with miserable workmen, who, receiving no wages in winter, will seize by violence what the inhumanity of their fellow-citizens denies to their necessities; for surrounded with luxury, and yielding to the most criminal passions, they expend impiously what they should spare for the poor."

But let us, in order to illustrate this subject still further, repair to a spot which abounds in every kind of interest. Let us proceed to the convent-gate, dear alike to the saint, the philosopher, the poet, the artist, the stranger, and the poor. The abbey of St. Riquier gave

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 257.

every day to the mendicants five sous of gold; it nourished three hundred poor, one hundred and fifty widows, and sixty clerks. Such was the liberality of St. Anselm, when Abbot of Bec, to the poor, who were daily fed in the hospitium, that not unfrequently he persuaded his monks to send from their own table the untouched viands, so that their own support was sometimes deemed owing to a miraculous intervention of Providence; when immediately after his exhortations to confidence in God, either a vessel would arrive from England with provisions, or some rich noble visit the monastery, and leave a memorial of his benevolence. In Italy, and in the Catholic Cantons of Switzerland, I used to find at certain hours the doors of all the convents and religious houses surrounded with crowds of cheerful poor people, bringing their dishes and vessels to receive food and alms; the monks and nuns would be seen engaged in conversation with some of them, who were disclosing their wants; and each for his little history seemed always sure of meeting with a most kind and gracious ear. "As for the poor," said one of the fathers to me, with whom I was conversing, while lodged in the convent of Camaldoli, among the Apennines, "there is no one around our monastery who has not something from it. The young and able are employed in some work or other, and receive wages, the old and weak, or such as are not in a condition to work, come here to our gate, and have their food daily; there is provision for all our poor brethren." St. Benedict, in a time of famine, having given whatever he could find in his abbey, ordered that in fine the last vessel of oil should be delivered to the poor *. Again, when a famine and pestilence devastated Aquitain, and many provinces of Gaul, St. Odilo, Abbot of Cluny, broke up the sacred vessels of the church, and many beautiful ornaments, and did not even spare the crowns which the Emperor Henry had left there as a memorial, and whatever he could collect he gave to the poor. One day as he rode by the way, he found two boys who had perished. Immediately dismounting he took off the woollen vestment, which was next his skin, and wrapped up the dead bodies in it, and so gave them sepulture †. Bartholomew de Carranza,

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Mor. iii. x. 21.
† Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 317.

the Dominican, after acquiring immense literary renown in Spain and Italy, on his return to Valladolid, in 1540, from the latter country sold all his books to succour the poor during a famine, and by his advice forty poor persons were nourished within the college during many months *. In the year 1197 a new and small monastery at Heisterbach, in the diocese of Cologne, made such efforts to relieve the distress of the people during a scarcity, that in one day there were counted fifteen hundred poor at the gate. Gebhard, who was then abbot, had an ox killed every day, which, together with enormous loaves of bread, was divided amongst them. The means of the house were slender, yet this bounty was continued till the coming in of the new fruits. On occasions of this kind the presence of a monastery was always attended by the same effects, and it will be curious to remark, in future ages, whether, when similar circumstances occur, the lay possessors, to whom the governments of Europe have consigned the houses of the religious, will be as insensible as the former proprietors to the loss of domestic treasures, in their zeal for relieving the wants of their distressed brethren; and also whether a minister of commerce in the capital, or a bench of magistrates on the spot, will be either able or willing to administer equal relief to the sufferers. In the year 1770, and that which succeeded, when a dreadful famine prevailed in Switzerland, Nicholas, Abbot of Einsiedelin, applied all the resources of the abbey to relieve the people. At immense expense were provisions of various kinds transported out of Italy over Mount St. Gothard, and distributed amongst them. The bread was baked within the abbey itself, and divided; and, besides, all the usual alms were given in an increased measure, for which charity the whole country afterwards formally expressed its gratitude †. Calmet shows that it was the ancient custom in all the principal houses of the order of St. Benedict, to give to the poor the tithe of all the revenues, whether of corn, wine, cattle, or money, without reckoning private, secret, and extraordinary alms ‡. Thus Franco, Abbot of Lobes, in the reign of Louis-le-Debonnaire, made a decree that all

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iv. 29.
† Tschudi Einsiedlische Chronik. 194.
‡ Comment. sur la Règle de S. Ben. tom. i. c. iv.

tenths should be given for the use of the poor and strangers at the gate of his monastery *. And similarly to the ancient statutes of the abbey of St. Peter at Corby, given by the holy Abbot Adalard, in the year 822, we read that a tenth of all things belonging to the house was to be given to the poor †. In the celebrated monastery of St. Maximinus, near Treves, there was a custom religiously observed, from the tenth till the seventeenth century, of giving twice a week a large portion of bread to every poor person who came for it, and as many as six hundred often applied. During the distribution the gates were closed, and all chariots were obliged to wait outside until the pious work was finished, which ordinance, it is said, displeased some rich men in latter times. The ancient statutes of Corby expressly sanction what some potentates before the revolution stigmatized as an abuse. "If strangers," they say, "should come from distant provinces exceeding the usual number of those relieved, the porter must provide what is necessary for them, but so as not to diminish any thing from those who are daily relieved ‡." Then follows incidental evidence, that this discipline did not lead to an abuse of charity, for there is a remarkable provision made in the event of there being but a small number to seek alms. After stating what provisions must be daily given at the gate of Corby, there is this sentence: "If it should happen at any time that fewer people come, the hospitalier and the porter are to keep this circumstance in mind, in order that another time, when more persons may arrive, what was then left may be distributed §. Never less than four denarii in money are to be given daily at the gate, besides wood, and clothes, and vessels." The holy abbot adds the following injunction: "We beseech all persons, therefore, who may be appointed to offices in this monastery, that in point of largesse and distribution they may attend rather to the will of God than to the example of our parsimony; since every one will have to render an account for himself ||."

* Fulcuinus de Gestis Abbatum Lobiensium apud Dacher. Spicil. tom. vi. p. 558.

† Statuta antiqua Corbeïensis, cap. vi. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. iv.

‡ Id. cap. iv. § Id. cap. iv. || Id. cap. v.

This was a reflection which members of the monastic order seem to have been at no time disposed to forget. Burkhard, Abbot of St. Gall, would sometimes return bare-foot, having given his shoes to the poor; and when his Chamberlain used to complain of the state of his wardrobe, in consequence of his charities, he used to reply, "If you do not give me what I ask, I know one that will; for the Dean, often to assist me, hides articles of clothing under the covering of my bed, that I may find them there *."

We have already seen, that St. Gregory the Great gave to a poor sailor not only all the money he had in his monastery, but also a piece of plate which belonged to his mother; and it was supposed by his biographer John the Deacon, that his subsequent elevation to the Pontificate was the reward of that act. Adjoining his monastery he maintained a house of entertainment for the poor, and every day he gave dinner to twelve poor strangers at his own table. This was the custom of many Abbots. Hear a capitulary of the Carthusians read. "Our Lord Jesus Christ says in his Gospel, give alms, and lo all things are clean to you. Therefore, we exhort and implore all Priors of our order, in the bowels of the same God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who suffered himself to be suspended on the wood of the cross for us, that according to the faculty of their respective houses, they would apply their whole hearts to giving great alms. For there is nothing so accordant with nature, as that we should do to others what we would desire to have done to ourselves in a similar necessity †." Even the prejudiced author of a modern history of Glastonbury, expresses admiration at the vast number of charitable foundations made by the monks of that Abbey for all kinds of distress. Brother Silvester was moved to embrace the order of St. Francis merely by witnessing the generous liberality of Brother Bernard Quintavalle to the poor ‡. We read of Capuchin friars, who, when they could not assist the poor in any other manner, used to beg leather or cloth from their relations, and make shoes and clothes with what was given them for the

* Ekkehard de Casibus S. Galli, cap. x.
† Annales Ord. Cartusiensis, tom. i. lib. iii. cap. xx.
‡ Les Chroniques des Frères Mineurs, lib. i. 27.

poor *. Regenbodo, a monk of Hirschau, used to give so much of his own allowance to the poor, that he left himself to suffer hunger and thirst, for it was the custom in the ninth century for each monk to receive a portion for his own support during the year †. Bartholomew de Martyribus, in his latter days, living retired in his convent of the holy cross at Viane, used to devote himself wholly to the instruction and comfort of the poor. Returning one Sunday evening, after preaching in the country, he met a number of indigent persons, to whom he gave all that he had; but one poor old widow, coming after the rest, and stating that she had not even a bed for her daughter, he appointed her to come under the convent wall, at a certain hour, when, on his return, he tied up his own bed, and after nightfall let it down from his window. The poor mother was below to receive it, and the friars did not discover, till after many days, that their illustrious brother had only the boards of his bed to sleep upon.

In the year 1740, notwithstanding the most deplorable spoliations which had been suffered at Jumièges, the monks of that Abbey furnished bread to six or seven hundred poor. This munificent charity was practised by that community to the last hour of its existence, so that when the revolution forced Dom Bride, the Prior, to fly from the house, he set out, accompanied with the prayers and tears of the surrounding people ‡.

But to recite the services of the monks, collectively and individually, to the poor, would be an interminable labour. It is enough to refer the reader to the lives of any eminent members of the monastic institute, which will soon convince him that, in respect to mercy, the character of an Angelrann, or a St. John of God, was typical of them all. In reading their annals, however, and indeed the history of the middle ages in general, one cannot but feel some degree of surprise, on remarking the number of instances in which extraordinary erudition, which might be thought to leave no time or memory for such works, was combined with the most tender solicitude for the poor; instances which seem to

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1539.
† M. Gerbert, Historia Nigræ Silvæ, l. 125.
‡ Deshayes, Hist. de l'Abbaye de Jumièges, p. 162.

indicate that faith had restored that supposed pristine order of nature, traces of which it was thought had been faintly discerned by those philosophers who had investigated the secrets of things, and who remarked, that merciful persons were inclined to historical researches and moral studies. Aristotle, in treating on physiognomy, ascribes to the merciful, as their sign, the disposition of being curious enquirers respecting manners, and always communicative; on which passage, Cocles, of Bologna, a physician of the middle ages, comments, and adds, that their cell of memory is greatly enlarged: "Memoriter nam retinent et libenter recitant facta hominum et gesta, præcipue ab antiquo *." Michael Scott affirms, that they are great watchers by night, and of subtle genius †.

What these curious investigators deemed conformable to nature, was seen realized in the great historians and philosophers of their time. When Muratori lived at Modena, as librarian to the Duke, he had a custom of distributing alms every day at twelve o'clock to the poor of his quarter. During the hours which he devoted to study, he would receive no visits from any but the poor; but at whatever hour any of them applied for relief, whether he was at his books or at table, he would instantly rise and give to them. In the severe season he used to provide a stock of beds and warm clothing to distribute among them, and sometimes, when he used to find a beggar stiff with cold, and hardly able to support himself, he used to have him carried to his house, warmed, placed to eat at his own table, and then sent away with alms. In addition to this ordinary bounty, he established a confraternity in the church of the Pomposa, to provide for the wants of persons who might be forced otherwise to beg, and also to furnish employment to the sons and daughters of the poor; and to aid this Institution, he published his Treatise on Christian Charity. He gave to it the revenue which he drew from his benefices, and, from the dedication of his works, and, as he wished to transmit to his heirs as an honourable memorial the gold chain which had been

* Magistri Bartholomei Coclitis Bononiens. Physionomisti Anastasis, lib. i. p. 20.

† Michael Scott, lib. Physionomiæ, cap. xlv.

presented to him by the Emperor Charles VI., he had it estimated, and a sum equivalent in value given to the fund. This institution supported 200 orphans, widows, and helpless persons, and paid 100 sequins every year to the hospital. Here we should allude also to the charity with which so many learned physicians attended the sick poor, of which the historians of Padua record instances. Bernardine Scardeoneo says that Jerome Tirabosco Coradino used to visit indigent sick persons for nothing, more willingly than others repair to the rich for money; to whom refer these words, which are inscribed on his sepulchre in the church of St. John. "In hac urbe morbos summa cum charitate depellens." Similar to him was Jerome Urbino, a man of great piety, without whom it was thought no one in Padua, whether rich or poor, could recover;—so benign also, and condescending, that not only the citizens, but every sick person among the spiritual poor of Christ, in houses of religion, used to seek his assistance *.

But, leaving these clerks of science and letters, and turning our attention now to the manners of the Lay society in the middle ages, we shall find that men of secular life had caught the influence of the ecclesiastical spirit, and were directed in a great measure, as far as relates to the treatment of the poor, in conformity with the rule of religious perfection. King Robert used to nourish, out of his own revenues, 1000 poor persons in eight different cities that he had selected. Whenever he travelled in Lent, he used to feed 100 every day. On Maunday Thursday, at the hour of tierce, he served 300 with his own hands, having one knee on the ground; to each person he gave vegetables, a fish, bread, and one denarium. At sext he did the same. And after dinner, he laid aside his royal robe, and washed the feet of 160 poor men, giving to each two solidi. Helgald the Benedictine monk, describes all his charities in detail. On one occasion, returning from a certain monastery, he found that his lance had been gloriously adorned with silver by his wife. After looking at it some time, he began to reflect whether there were not some person who might want the value of it. So, calling a poor man to him, he asked him for an iron instrument, with which

* De Antiq. Patavii, lib. xi. 9.

he could take off the silver, and when this was brought to him, he closed the doors, and then, with the assistance of the poor man, removed the silver from the lance, and, with his own holy hands, put it into his bag, and charged him as he departed, to take care that no one should discover him. He used to have his palace filled with the holy poor, and they were admitted to feed round his table. He chose, however, twelve poor men, whom he especially loved, whom he had always with him, in honour of the holy Apostles, whom he loved with a devout heart, always preparing for their solemn festivals with a votive fast. These poor men always rode before him wherever he went, and at his death he prayed that their number might never be diminished. The chief care of this man of mercy was thus described:—

> "Pascere jejunos, nudos vestire, ligatos
> Solvere, discordes conciliare sibi;
> Et quæcumque homines miseri solatia quærunt,
> Hæc, ut possibile est, promere corde pio *."

Theganus relates of the Emperor Lewis-le-Debonnaire, that he never sat down to table until he had given his daily alms; and that, whenever he was travelling, he used to entertain the poor when he rested, having at all places where he stopped, a xenodochia ready prepared †.

St. Oswald, king of the Northumbrians, was not surpassed even by the holy Bishop St. Aidan in deeds of mercy. On one Easter festival, both bishop and king being seated at table, there arrived a multitude of poor from other parts; the King ordered not only the yet untasted viands, but a silver dish then before him to be broken to pieces, and the fragments to be distributed among them. Petrus Alphonsus says, that a certain well educated youth, son of a wise minister of state, to whom a King had promised, on his father's death, the same dignity, gave away all his paternal property to the poor, meditating on the vanity of the world, and the mercy of God; and, being accused to the King as a dissipator of his father's goods, he replied, that he had not dissipated,

* Epit. vit. Rob. ap. Duchesne Hist. Franc. Script. tom. iv.
† Duchesne, tom. ii. p. 135.

but congregated them, and placed them beyond the reach of thieves and corruption. At which answer the King was so pleased, that he made him his privy counsellor in place of his father. St. Boniface, when a lad, used to be flogged by his mother for giving away his clothes, even his shirt, to the poor.

One of the first traits recorded of Roger, king of Sicily, is his love in boyhood for giving alms, and when he had nothing to give the poor, his custom of running to his mother Adalesia to beg that she would give him something for them *.

Hear now the monk of Monte Cassino describe the boyhood and youth of the great Abbot Desiderius, who became sovereign Pontiff, under the name of Victor :— "He was of very gentle blood, and his father was Count of Beneventum, and he was always trained up by gentlemen, and instructed in good customs. After his father's death, he used to take what his mother had, and give it continually to the poor; and with his precious clothes he used to cover the poor. And when his mother saw such subtraction of her riches, not to prevent him from doing his will and pleasure, she used to let him do what he wished, for she loved him with great love, as well she might love such a holy, and beautiful, and gentle youth, and her only son †." A great almoner, says Christine de Pisan, was King Charles V., as may be witnessed in his many foundations of churches and colleges; he gave to poor abbeys and priories, and to churches; he restored hospitals with great alms; he gave to the mendicant friars, and to poor scholars, whom he comforted and supported till they could have a degree; and whenever he heard of any one grown old or distressed, whether poor religious persons or others, or of any poor maidens that had no portion, or poor orphans or widows, or persons in any piteous case whatever, he gave of his own largely; and every day continually with his own hand, humbly and devoutly he used to give a certain sum of money to a number of poor people, and he used to kiss the hand of each of them ‡.

* Alexand. Abbat. de Rebus gestis Rogerii, apud Murat. Rer. Italic. Script., tom. v.

† L'Ystoire de li Normant, lib. iii. c. 49.

‡ Livre des Fais du sage Roy, chap. xxxii.

The Archduke Leopold, and his father the Emperor Ferdinand II., were often heard to declare that if all their treasury were to be exhausted, they would give their habits to the poor, as St. Leopold is known to have done *. I find these lines on the tomb of Lewis VII., king of France :—

> " Pauperis ut memores, melius sint pauperiores,
> Gaudeo pauper homo pauperiore domo †."

The Kings of France used even to claim, as belonging to their dignity, the title of " Chief Administrators of the Goods of the Poor," as may be witnessed in the Royal Letters of the 26th of February, 1475, relative to the Hospital of Bourdeaux, an office, which, in the time of such princes as Lewis-le-Debonnaire, Robert St. Lewis and Charles V., might have been fairly granted to kings, without an injustice, or exposing the interests of the poor to danger. The ancient capitularies attest, that the Kings of France of the first two races, consecrated the largest part of their treasury every year to the assistance of the indigent ‡.

In later times one may conceive what an immense advantage it was for the poor to have frequently one of themselves in the person of some holy friar, loving poverty and the poor, at the court and in the very council of the monarch, as his confessor. In ages of faith those who wore rough raiment were in kings' houses. Such was John of St. Thomas, the Dominican, confessor of King Philip IV. of Spain, who was always seen attending to the interests of the poor, whenever it was a question of levying supplies, receiving and presenting their petitions, becoming their advocate on every occasion, and then visiting them in sickness or in prison. And how zealously did many princes correspond to the counsels which such men gave!

A certain ambassador at the table of Amedæus, duke of Savoy, making inquiries respecting sporting dogs, the Duke told him that he should see his kennel the following day. Having arrived at the appointed hour, the Duke led him into a large hall, containing many long

* Avancin, les Vertus Heroiques de Leopold, &c.
† Ap. Duchesne, tom. iv.
‡ S. Victor, Tableau de Paris, vol. i. p. 58.

tables, at which a crowd of poor persons were dining. "These are my sporting dogs," said the Duke; "with these I go on the chase of heaven." "But how many idle, useless persons are among them?" replied the stranger. To whom the prince answered, "It is not my business to scrutinize their breasts. If God should examine me and you minutely, where should we stand? I must regard the poor as a father—not as a judge."

Nor were the nobles generally backward in the same track, though history has to record so many of their names among the number of the oppressors. Innumerable examples were found amongst them of that wise folly which from the sycamore the publican gathered as the fruit of life. It is usual, with many writers, to designate the barbarians who established themselves in the Roman empire as having been but partially converted to Christianity; but the missionaries appear to have impressed them, at all events, with a due sense of the great commandments of the new law. During the famine which ensued after the wars of succession between the children of Gondioch, king of Burgundy, we read of Erdicie, a prince of the country, who, in the year 472, sent his men with horses and chariots throughout the whole kingdom of Burgundy, to seek the indigent and sick poor, and had them all brought to his castles and houses, which he filled with them; and when the famine was at an end, he placed them again on the waggons; and each person was conducted to the place from which he had been taken *.

Such effect had the exhortations to almsgiving of St. Elphege, Archbishop of Canterbury, on the rich of that time, that they eagerly sought for objects of its exercise, and we are told left not a man throughout the province subject to want—a sentence which one might deem sufficient to startle the men of Kent at the present day,—at least to render their eloquence more guarded when next they meet together, to take counsel against the Pope on Penenden Heath. Things are certainly much changed since the thirteenth century in England, when men could think of leaving no poor person throughout a whole district without a donation. Sir William Vavasour,

* Paradin, Hist. de Lyon, lib. ii. c. 3.

of Haslewood, who leaves his best horse, with the arms befitting a knight, for his mortuary to the chapel of St. Leonard, bequeathed also one penny to every poor person of the district; adding, that the sum total specified shall be "more if need be." The type of rich and honourable men, in ages of faith, was very different from what it is at present. It may be seen, in the character ascribed by the monk of Monte Cassino to Richard, prince of Capua—the richest of the rich, the humblest of the humble, the bravest of the brave*; or in that of Robert Guiscard—adorned with the dignity of all virtue—so humble, that amongst his people he appeared not as the seignor, but as one of the knights, from whom there was no poor widow woman or little boy who might not ask advice, and to whom they might relate all their thoughts and poverty; who justly judged all that was brought before him, exercising along with justice forgiveness and pity, well observing the words, "Tant seras plus grant, tant plus te humilieras à touz†."

Guido, son of Gaymere, and brother of the ferocious Gisolfe, furnishes another example. "Devout he was to the church," we read, "and continually befriending the poor and giving them alms—honourable knight, and the bravest of the Longobards; of whom the Normans always said, that amongst that race no one was more precious than he‡."

It was the custom of the rich, in early ages, to give the tenth of their goods expressly to the poor§. And this practice was by no means confined to the great, for we find many instances of its observance in the middle and lower ranks, comprising the tradesman and the labourer. St. William of Rochester, who was a baker, is expressly recorded to have always given to the poor the tenth loaf of his workmanship. In Burgundy, the growers of vines had the holy custom of giving, from time to time, some portion of their best wine to the poor, in order to obtain the blessing of Heaven upon their vineyards‖.

* L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. iv. c. 17.
† Id. liv. v. c. 1. ‡ Id. liv. viii. c. 2.
§ Germania Sacra, tom. i. 78.
‖ Monteil, Hist. des François, tom. iii. 26.

A writer of the thirteenth century speaks of a certain shoemaker who used to bring whatever remained of his profit, after providing for his food and clothing, every Saturday, to St. Peter's Church at Rome, and give it there to the poor *.

During three centuries no one carried a sword in time of peace; but the sign of nobility was a long purse hanging from the belt, for containing alms; and the glory of arms yielded to the renown of mercy to the poor; so that Roger, youngest son of Tancred de Hauteville, and one of the bravest knights of the world, derived his surname from his liberality rather than from any other virtue, being styled "Roger of the purse," because he always had it in his hand, dispensing bounty. In fact, men boasted of the great charities of their ancestors as they would in these days of their exploits on the field of battle, or of their rhetorical triumphs in the senate. The noble Roman family of the Frangipani derives its name from the great charities of one of its ancestors, in feeding the poor of Rome, as Philip Villani mentions in his life of Dante.

The Badoarian family at Venice, which had erected the church of St. John the Evangelist, in the year 790, when raising a tomb within it, in the sixteenth century, to Angelo Badoario, deemed it the highest eulogium, when it was made, to testify that he ruled the hospital of the poor with singular charity; and again, when an inscription was to be placed upon the sepulchre of the great admiral Andro Badoario, these noble men were content to say of him, "Qui cum honores omnes esset consecutus, pietatem in pauperes unam coluit †." No blazon was deemed more noble on a monument than the lines which commemorated the almsgiving fervour of the dead: as those over the grave of Martial d'Auvergne, which record that he was the counsellor and nourisher of the poor, and that he patiently rendered up his spirit to Christ ‡; and those on the tomb of the third Grimoald, duke of Beneventum, which is placed near the sepulchre of his father Arichis, in that basilica, and which end thus:—

* Vin. Bellov. Spec. Mor. lib. iii. p. x.
† Splend. Venet. in Thess. Ant. Italiæ, v.
‡ Gouget, Bibliotheque Françoise, tom. x. 40.

"Terrenas gazas nunquam servavit amando,
Sed mox captivis, indigenisque dedit.
Itala, Romana, Illyrica, Hebræa, Afra, Pelasga,
Morte tua, Princeps, jam sine fine dolent *."

Ah, reader! there is much profit from these tombs. Mark that of Sebastian Ziani, duke of Venice, in the Benedictine Church of St. George, on which you read, "Patriæ lux, spes miserorum MCXXVIII.;" that of John Lando, the senator, in the Church of St. Antonio, with the words, "Ex opibus suis nihil sibi præter jus largiendi indulsit;" that of Duke Nicholas Marcello, the just and pacific, in the Church of St. Marina, with those, "In pauperes piissimus;" that so mouldering with age in the Church of St. Mary of Mercy, of James Morus, a Venetian warrior, with the line,

"Prodiga pauperibus Christi manus extitit ejus †:"

that of Raimund Solimano, an illustrious citizen of Padua, erected with such magnificence in the fourteenth century in the Church of the Hermits in that city, on which you read, "Pauperiem miserans ‡."

In the baronial court, as well as in the yard of every obscure citizen, there was always a distribution of food to the poor, after the family had dined. Giraldus ascribes this custom even to the degenerate Welsh: he says, that "when they ate, the first slice of bread was always given to the poor §." The remains of every dish that had been touched at the table of Charles the Bold belonged to the poor ||. Owing to the preaching of Eustache de Flay, the pope's legate in the thirteenth century, there was at all great tables in England an eleemosynary dish to receive part of the victuals which they offered to the poor ¶.

Incidental notice of these customs occurs in the life of St. Francis of Assisium; for the holy father, being invited to dine with Matthew Rimido, a Roman gentleman, and arriving before the master had entered, the

* Italia Sacra, tom. viii. 38.
† Splend. Ven. in Thes. Ant. Ital. v.
‡ Bern. Scard. de Ant. Pat. iii. 13.
§ Girald. Cambrens. Itin. Cambriæ.
|| Lamarche, Estat de la Maison du Duc de Bourgogne.
¶ Bulæus, Hist. Universit. Paris, tom. iii. 7.

holy father being unknown to the servants, who happened to be but recently hired, we read that he sat down in the court among some poor people, and began to eat with them of the alms given; and the master arriving, and finding his guest so placed, seated himself down also on the ground, and made his dinner thus in common with them all *.

St. Peter Damian, in his treatise on alms dedicated to Mainard, bishop of Urbinum, relates that the Marquis Mainfred, in the farthest bounds of Liguria, on Easter Sunday, prepared a magnificent banquet, and having placed the poor in order at many tables, he himself, with his servants, waited on them, and then partook of what they had left †.

In the middle ages, when men made a feast, they invited the poor. The monk of Monte Cassino, in his history of the Normans in Italy, after relating the departure of Count Drogo from the pope, and his coming to a castle called Monte Alegro, on the feast of St. Lawrence in the year 1051, proceeds as follows:—"He was accustomed to go to the office on solemn festivals, and to adorn the church, and to invite the poor to dinner, and to make offerings to the poor; and on this occasion Drogo wished to be here, to his delectation, and to celebrate this day with solemnity in honour of St. Lawrence, martyr; and all things necessary for the poor were arranged, and they were invited ‡." This mode of having delectation in the eleventh century, is worthy of being remarked.

In the year 1588, Camillus Gonzaga, a man no less illustrious for his alms than for his noble blood, used to feed every day, during the scarcity, in his house at Novellara, in the Venetian territory, two hundred poor persons, on whom he waited himself; while they were not only fed, but instructed in the Christian doctrine. In 1590 his bounty was even greater, to meet the difficulties of the time; and it is said that his sweet and affable conversation delighted his poor guests, with whom he used to dine as only one of their company.

* Marco Diego de Navarre Sola, les Chroniques des Mineurs, lib. i. c. 118.

† Annal. Camaldul. lib. xviii.

‡ L'Ystoire de li Normant, liv. iii. c. 22.

Lo! there stands the castle of Loretto, inhabited by Landulph, count of Aquinum, seigneur of Loretto and of Belicastro. The gate is besieged by a crowd of poor persons, for the scarcity which prevails this year has occasioned great and general distress. But who is this boy, with the face of an angel, that seems about ten years of age, who is distributing alms among them, and speaking to them with such an expression of love? It is the count's son, Thomas, lately returned from school at Monte Cassino, a truly angelic lad, and so devoted to the poor that he gives them part of his own dinner; and it is said the steward has caught him sometimes taking things without permission to give to them, though when they searched within his clothes they could only find some flowers *. In a chapel at Belicastro, in Calabria, there is a very ancient picture, in which St. Thomas is represented as a boy opening his vest and producing some roses, which had been concealed within it, to a man who seems to interrogate him †.

St. Ambrose of Sienna, of the illustrious family of Sansedoni, when a youth, used to go out in search of poor people through the streets of that city, not thinking it enough to satisfy those who presented themselves at his father's gate. By consent of his pious mother, Justina, he turned part of the house into a kind of hospice, and had permission, on certain days every week, to receive and entertain all poor passengers, on whom he used to wait, serving them at table, persuaded that he was entertaining Christ ‡. This was at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Clement VIII., Benedict XIII., and many other sovereign pontiffs, used on certain days to cause poor persons to be entertained in their own palace, and would wait on them at table. It was a custom that prevailed very widely, to keep a kind of host's table for poor strangers, which was in the very hall where the family of the house dined. St. Gregory of Tours mentions a certain gentleman who would never sit down at table with his wife and children, unless there was some poor man to eat with them; and he describes

* Touron, Vie de St. Thomas d'Aquin, 17.

† Gabr. Barii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriæ, lib. iv.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. lib. 5.

him, on one occasion, when he could find no beggar in the streets, as going outside the town in the evening, to look from the gate whether he could discern any poor stranger, that he might lead him to his house to supper. Even the dark mysterious men whom history as well as poetry represents as appearing from time to time among the feudal nobility, were not exempt from the influence of the general habits of mercy to the poor. The chief of Lara's wide domain is an instance;

> "For though his lonely habits threw of late
> Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
> For thence the wretched ne'er unsooth'd withdrew,
> For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.
> Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
> The humble pass'd not his unheeding eye;
> Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
> They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof."

Although instances of individual bounty might be multiplied without end, for the innumerable friends of God in different ages, dissimilar in many respects, were all of the same disposition in regard to alms—so that, whenever an occasion of showing mercy occurred, they all resembled each other, and gave convincing proof that one was their common Father—yet I cannot refrain from adding, in this place, a few remarkable examples. Many authors have written histories of alms, as did Valentinus, Leuchtius, and Drexelius. I shall merely produce a few anecdotes relating to them, such as appeared to me most striking in the perusal of our ancient chronicles.

The alms of the rich, in the middle ages, often surpassed the expectations of the poor. "A certain count," says a writer of the thirteenth century, "saw a poor boy half naked asking alms, and gave him a denarium, desiring him to buy a purse with it, and bring it to him, and adding that he would then put in it what he thought necessary. The boy went, and wishing to save a little, kept back one obol, and with the other bought a purse and came back to the count, who asked him how much he had paid for it; and when the boy disdained to tell a lie, and said, 'One obol, and I bring you back the other,' the count filled the purse with money, saying, 'If you had brought back a larger purse, young man, you would have gone away with more money.'" But another

anecdote from the same author is still more beautiful: "A certain man, through infirmity, not being able to fast till a late hour, caused some poor persons to breakfast with him on fasting days, saying in his prayer, 'O Lord, if thou art angry with me for not fasting to-day, I will say to thee hereafter, before thy judgment-seat, Lord, if I did eat before the time, thou didst eat with me *!'"

Thibaud the Great, count of Blois, and fourth of that name, also called the saint, whose religious foundations and presents to churches were so numerous, gave proof of the utmost charity and mercy for the poor. Thomas de Cantimpré relates, that one day he gave every thing he had, even to his coat and cloak, in alms; and St. Bernard relates, that during a famine he pledged all that he possessed to assist poor families, not sparing even a certain precious vase, when he had nothing else left †.

Behold Charles of Blois, living as an equal with nobility, and as a brother with the poor!—equitable and disinterested in his judgments, pious and austere as a monk. His table was frugal, and his repasts were accompanied with holy lessons. He gave even his needful to the indigent; eighty poor persons were always at his table; and on Holy Thursday sat thirteen, on whom he waited with his own hands, and washed their feet ‡. Richard II., duke of Normandy, who built the rich and renowned abbey of Fescamp, caused a stone coffin to be made for himself, in which he was to be buried; and this he used to fill with provisions for the poor every Friday, as long as he lived, to which he added twenty sous of silver §. The wife of Count Egbert, at the court of Charlemagne, in like manner, caused her coffin to be made many years before her death, which was twice each day filled with provisions that were given to the poor ||.

Memorable was the habitual bounty of Fulco, the good count of Anjou; but one act of charity and humility, above all, rendered him celebrated in the middle ages. It was his custom never to disdain any one, how-

* Speculum Mor. lib. iii. p. x. 22.
† Bernier, Hist. de Blois, 296.
‡ Lobineau, Hist. de Brit. liv. vii.
§ Duchesne, Antiquitez des Villes de France, tom. ii. 382.
|| Drexelius de Eleemos. p. ii. c. 4.

ever abject. He used to ask each poor man, with the liberal benevolence of humility, respecting his name and country and circumstances. After relieving many poor, he would only desire them to go to the monastery of St. Martin at Tours, and pray for themselves. Once, as he was journeying through his domains for the purpose of maintaining peace and justice, surrounded by a crowd of nobles, upon coming within view of the church of the blessed Martin the confessor, according to his custom he dismounted from his horse, and, with knees upon the bare ground, prayed for some time. The attendants, out of respect to the count, stood aside. As he rose from prayer he saw on his right hand a man of the most horrible aspect, with hands and feet all corroded, covered with elephantine pustules, and miserably diseased with leprosy, who asked the count to have pity on him. The rest of the nobles and the domestics of the count feared to approach, or even to look at him; the count, of a sounder mind, put forth his hand to the bier, intending to give him something; but the leper cried out, "No, my Lord, I do not mean such indulgence; but because my feet are eaten away with leprosy, and I cannot either walk myself or hold myself on a horse to be carried to the church of the confessor, perchance you could carry me thither; and there I should find some man of God, who, for the redemption of his sins, would order for me what was necessary in the hospital of lepers, where I might be received." The count no sooner heard him, than he carefully wrapped the leper round in his own mantle, and, to the astonishment of the beholders, placed him on his shoulders, and bore that burden for two leagues, till he came to the church of the blessed Martin; and then it is said that the leper disappeared, and the count understood the mystery, but kept silence, and allowed the rest to remain in ignorance of it. He had carried this burden from the gate of Evrerdon to the porch of the blessed Martin.

The young son of the Count of Ebernstein, who became the second general of the Dominican order, under the name of Blessed Jordan of Saxony, had a custom of giving alms every day to the first beggar who presented himself. Having been sent to Paris to pursue his studies, he was so enamoured with the ecclesiastical offices, that he never failed to repair by night to the

church of our Lady, to assist at matins ; and if he arrived before the porter had opened the gates, he used to meditate before them, undismayed by the horror of the darkness. One night, as he was running for this purpose, and fearing that he should not arrive in time to hear the beginning of matins, a stranger accosted him and asked charity. Having no money, he took off his belt and gave it to him; and we are told, that when he entered the church and knelt before the image of our Saviour, he felt how greatly that act of mercy was agreeable to God *.

St. Dominick, when a student at Palencia, having given every thing else that he possessed to the poor in a year of famine, sold even his books that had been glossed, as an ancient writer says, with his own hand, in order that the price might be employed in relieving them. It is said, that this holy youth had been always particularly encouraged to give great alms, by his noble mother. In the old History of Du Guesclin we read that while a youth in his father's house, where, on all other accounts he was but little regarded, he had a custom, that if any poor person asked alms, and he had no money, he would undress himself, and give his clothes, for the love of our Lord ; which trait pleased his father far more than any thing else which was in him †— remarkable testimony assuredly to the character of that father, or rather to the spirit of that age, which could recognize and admire the pious love of our Lord in such an act of a truant lad, who was generally accused of forgetting his rank, and conducting himself like the son of a peasant. This love, prompting acts of heroic generosity to the poor, was even a feature of the chivalrous character, as not only the ancient romances which represent its manners, but many of the monastic records, which speak of the early lives of convertites, can attest. Garnier de Mont-morillon, a monk of Maison-Dieu, had been once a distinguished knight in the world. One day, as he returned from a pilgrimage to St. James, riding alone with his squire, he met a beggar at the skirts of a forest, and, not having any money to give to this man, who asked alms, he devoutly offered him a pair of precious gloves, which had been given to him by

* Touron, Vie de S. Dom. lib. vi.
† Chronique du Guesclin, 40.

his lady love. This act remained unknown, until at length he himself related simply to some persons how, for the love of Christ, he had once made such an offering to a poor beggar *. The charity of feudal lords did not, however, disdain to flow in a more ordinary channel.

Matthew de Montmorenci, in the year 1302, during the fair of the Landit, destined a certain rent for purchasing clothes and shoes for the poor of Montmorenci, which were distributed by a canon, by the curate, and by one of the townsmen †. In the year 1205, Matthew de Montmorenci assigned, on his estate of Ecouen, many sums to be given to the poor, and also to monks, ordaining that every year a certain quantity of corn should be applied to making bread, which was to be distributed to the poor every day in Lent, by the canons of the Collegiate Church of St. Martin at Montmorenci ‡. In 1588, Abel de la Rochette, Seigneur de Cervon, and his wife Margueritte de Lyonne, made a foundation in the village for supporting a schoolmaster, for marrying every year a certain number of poor maidens, and for clothing yearly six poor persons §.

The love which many of the great Seigneurs of the middle ages evinced for the poor, is certainly not one of the least remarkable features in their history. How forcibly is this indicated in one expression of a letter, written by Father John de Avila, to John of God, of Grenada, where he says, "I thought the Duke of Sese had sent you a present. If he do not, remember to ask him, and he will send you something; for he loves you greatly, from knowing that you devote yourself to comfort the poor ‖." The charity and alms of the good Cleberge, at Lyons, during the famine in 1531, render him an historic personage. How admirable was the charity, how prodigious was the alms of the noble and rich Florentines, during the great dearth of 1346 and 1347. Again, in 1496, when famine was added to the political misfortunes which harassed both the city and territory

* Orderic Vital. Hist. Norman, lib. viii.
† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. iii. 385.
‡ Id. tom. iv. 293. § Id. tom. xiii. 79.
‖ De Avila, Epist. xvii.

of Florence, how merciful was that conduct of the inhabitants, in not allowing that the entrance into the city should be denied to the wretched, so that great crowds of poor people from a distance wandered about the streets receiving copious alms from the noble and wealthy citizens ?

Angelo Acciajoli, Bishop of Florence, and the magistrates of the city, rivalled each other on that occasion in works of mercy. All who fled thither were graciously received, without distinction of friend or enemy, lodged and nourished as long as the famine lasted. Troops of poor arrived daily at the gates, and the citizens never grew weary in giving them all the same reception *. Similar effects followed after the preaching of Savonarola in that city. The rich rivalled one another in liberality to the poor. At the end of each sermon, ladies of quality used to give up their rings, their necklaces, parts of their dress, or most precious jewels, to the persons who collected. John Picus, of Mirandola, by advice of Savonarola, having sold his estates, set aside two thousand gold crowns to give in charity to the poor. In vain he besought the friar who had given him the counsel to accept at least four hundred crowns, to form a dower for his two sisters, who, in consequence of the disordered state of their father's affairs, were reduced almost to the necessity of seeking their bread. The ministers of mercy in the ages of faith were not hypocrites. The friar would not permit them to receive one shilling †.

The magnificence of Cosmo de' Medici was universally celebrated, but the full extent and number of his charitable deeds were not known till after his death, when his son, making the inventory of his property, found that there was hardly a citizen of any quality who did not owe him large sums. He used to anticipate their demand, and provide for all their wants. Marsilius Ficinus declares, that he has been moved even to tears at hearing of the prodigious alms and charity of Lorenzo de' Medici, during the late holy festivals of the Church. " If it be effeminate to shed tears, Michelocti, I confess myself to be effeminate. Such is my disposition, whether

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. xiii.

† Idem. tom. iii. 23.

through a certain tender joy, or through I know not what strange affection, I weep as often as I consider how pious is our Lorenzo, how merciful to the poor, how beneficent to all men. While he wipes away tears from other eyes, he causes, by some marvellous fascination, mine to flow over *."

During a scarcity, when the poor of Rimini, and of the villages around, lay languishing in great distress, brother Francis, a Capuchin friar, went about carrying a large cross on his shoulders, and crying, "O citizens, help Christ, who is famishing." In this manner he collected such a quantity of corn and beans, that he could thenceforth nourish all the poor, to whom, under a certain portico of the city, he daily distributed food with his own hands; and as the supply exceeded the demand, a pious farmer gave part of a field, that the remainder of the beans might be sown in it for the use of the poor, which produced a most abundant harvest †.

In 1577, when a great sickness was prevalent at Verona, for which the physicians prescribed the use of old wine, there was scarcely any one in the city who could furnish it but a nobleman of the family of Vilmercati, and though the almoner of the Capuchins felt shame on being obliged to apply so often for a supply, that gentleman would never allow his servants to refuse giving it; so that a report went through all Verona, that his casks had become inexhaustible ‡.

So much was seen in the last book respecting the charitable works of the devout female sex in ages of faith, that we need hardly seek farther illustrations of such mercy, though it may be well to remark, in a few instances, the holy and benevolent idea which inspired it, as well as the ingenious and affectionate manner in which it was reduced to practice. Indeed the rule was the same for all. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; "that is to say," adds Guy de Roye, "thou shalt love and desire that he should love and serve God, and do good works, and arrive at Paradise, as thou wishest for thyself §:" and there was no provision in the middle

* Mars. Ficinus, Epist. lib. i.
† Annales Capucinorum, an. 1599.
‡ Id. an. 1577.
§ Guy de Roye le Doctrinal de Sapience.

ages to check the alms of a Ruberto of Padua, who when canon of that cathedral, used every morning to give a piece of silver to each poor mendicant that he found in the cathedral when he first entered it *: an example showing a type which had many imitators amongst both men and women, although the mercy of the latter does seem to have been more avowedly in all instances directed by this supernatural motive: so that it is peculiarly well expressed in that symbolic image of a young widow holding in one hand the model of a church, and with the other giving alms to a poor cripple, which, under the name of St. Elizabeth, stands against a pillar in the beautiful church, under her invocation, at Marbourg. Some anxiety to promote the spiritual welfare of the poor, was generally at the bottom in all their deeds of mercy; as when Madame de Chantal visits an unhappy victim of vice, tends her through a long sickness, and at length succeeds in effecting the cure of her soul, while she only seemed occupied in administering relief to the body. To honour God in his saints was another object generally associated with their benevolence to the poor. At Lisbon, on St. Antony's day, an English traveller describes his meeting the Prior of Avis, a most benign prelate, who has been passing it in consoling the sick and indigent, climbing up to their miserable chambers to afford assistance in the name of the saint whose festival was celebrating, and whose fame for every charitable act has been handed down by the inhabitants of that city from father to child, through a long series of generations. It was with the alms of devout women, given with similar intentions, that such visitors were often provided. Some view to facilitate the attendance of the poor at the divine offices, or to render them sensible of the connexion between the bounty which relieved them, and the love of Jesus Christ, was sure to be discernible in the mode of dispensation. The holy seasons of the Church were therefore those on which their alms were chiefly distributed. The days which are selected by princes and nobles of the reformed creed to throw open their brilliant palaces to the rich, and to furnish forth their tables with the most sumptuous fare, were those on which the Catholic nobility sat by the side of beggars, hearing the preacher, who explained the

* Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patav. lib. ii. 6.

parable of Dives and Lazarus. Queen Blanche, mother of St. Louis, left seventy acres of land in the parish of Louvre, near Paris, to furnish bread, which was to be given to all poor persons who should apply for it on the day of Midlent *.

These alms of Lent were always accompanied with an intimation that they were given through devotion for that holy season, as may be witnessed in the letter of her son concerning them †. The mode in which women dispensed charity to the poor in the middle ages, furnishes a striking example of what we remarked in the beginning, respecting the recognized incompatibility between the manners of a dissipated and irreligious life, with the grace of the blessed merciful; for their generosity is always shown as the result of deep religious impressions, and generally in connection with personal abnegation and austerity. The Duchess, say the old writers of the life of St. Elizabeth, would often command for herself a dinner such as that of the poor, in order that she might know by experience what kind of food they partook of. The castle of Bouchet belonged at one time to the Lady Anne Martinozzi, sister of Cardinal Mazarine, Princess of Conty, whose epitaph in the church of St. Andre des Arcs, at Paris, attested that, disgusted with the world at the age of nineteen years, she sold her jewels to nourish the poor of Berry, Champagne, and Picardy, during the famine of 1662, remaining a widow at the age of twenty-nine ‡.

In the thirteenth century, Hedwige, Princess of Poland, used to nourish daily thirteen beggars, as if Christ and his Apostles, and wherever she travelled she took them along with her; but for other poor she had a separate kitchen, and servants apart to wait on them §. No mother ever showed greater love to her own children, than was evinced for the poor by Leonora of Austria, sister of the Emperor Rodolph II. She used to give them the gems from her robes, and to prepare the food for them with her own hands. She often rose secretly in the dead of the night, to visit the sick, and sometimes

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. v. 476.
† Ap. Duchesne, tom. v.
‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xi. 67.
§ Drexelius de Eleemos. p. ii. c. 4.

remained with them during three or four entire days. The only complaint that she ever uttered, when unable to leave her apartment through illness, was, that she could not visit the poor. Catherine Ciboa, Duchess of Camerino, nearly related to three sovereign Pontiffs, a woman no less distinguished by piety and greatness of mind, than by learning, having a perfect knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and being skilled in theology, philosophy, and nearly all arts, is commemorated in the annals of the Capuchins, whom she loved and protected from their commencement, as being still more illustrious, on account of her eminent disposition to exercise mercy. Her house was always filled with a crowd of indigent persons; and no one ever departed from her gate empty handed or sorrowful. But above all works of love, we are told that she preferred those which tended to promote the salvation of others *.

The details respecting the alms of devout women, which occur in all representations of the ancient feudal life, show not only the fervour which inspired them in relieving the poor, but the prodigies of good which they effected. During a year of scarcity Madame de Chantal, the blessed foundress of the order of the Visitation, nourished not only all the poor on the baron's estates, but also those of the surrounding country for seven leagues round; and though some persons used to come occasionally twice in the day, she would never refuse them †. The common saying on the tongue of all the poor in Poland used to be, that there would be no poor in that kingdom if the blessed Grimislava, mother of king Boleslaus the Chaste, had been still alive ‡. St. Vincent de Paul was enabled to perform his great works of charity by means of devout women of the first rank, such as the duchess d'Aiguillon, the princess of Mantua, afterwards queen of Poland, the marchioness of Magnelais, and others. When the lady of the manor was dying, the poor of the surrounding country used often to demand and obtain permission to approach her bed-side, as we read of the lady of Chevreux d'Esturville §. What an affecting picture might be

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1528.
† Marsollier, Vie de Mde. de Chantal. i. 55.
‡ Wadd. ann. Minorum, tom. iv. 1258.
§ Vie de Elizabeth Ranquet, dame d'Esturville, Paris, 1660.

placed upon this tomb, which opens to receive the queen of Naples. On one side you might see an altar, from which a priest is turning, as if having celebrated the holy mass; and fronting it, on the other, a bed, on which the young queen is represented in the act of giving a book to one in kingly guise, who receives it on his knees. There need be added no inscription; tradition would supply the comment, and record, that in that book were written the names of all the indigent families who had long been receiving her secret alms, without knowing from whose mercy the relief had come.

Madame de Pollalion, we read, when a child in her parents' house, being under the direction of father Lebrun, a Dominican friar, had no greater pleasure than in comforting and assisting the poor. She used to give them her pocket-money, and even what was given for her own dinner. On one occasion, having found a poor sick child, she begged permission to have him taken care of in her father's house, and then attended him like a little sister till he died *.

We have already seen that these Catholic ladies used to visit the cottages of the peasants, and teach them how to assist the sick, and give them clothes, and tend them in their illness, and serve them on their knees. Many interesting and highly poetic scenes resulted from the charitable works of women in the middle ages, which even profane history does not disdain to exhibit. O how did the burning words of Christ dissolve the hearts of those, who in the gentleness of their sweet youth had never trodden on a worm, or bruised a living flower, but they had pitied it with needless tears! Madame de Chantal meeting three poor young men in great distress, and having no money, gave them her diamond ring off her finger, though it had belonged to her revered husband; and it is said, that she felt such joy at making this sacrifice, that she resolved from that hour never to refuse any person who asked alms for the love of God.

On a certain Thursday, say the ancient chronicles of St. Elizabeth, the duchess was descending from the castle of Wartbourg into the town, richly attired, and having given all her silver to a crowd of poor persons, when her charity was again invoked, having no money

* Vie de Madame de Pollalion, Paris, 1754.

left, she took one of her gloves, which was adorned with jewels, and gave it to the beggar. A young knight who was in her train, observing what she had done, went back and purchased the glove from the beggar, which he fastened to his helmet as a pledge of divine protection. Subsequently, he assisted at many tournaments, and went to join the crusaders. On returning home, and on his death-bed, he declared that he had always ascribed his escapes to having worn that memorial of the dear St. Elizabeth *.

Indeed, the magnificence of alms was a point on which we should have dwelt. Berta, wife of the emperor Henry IV., having been presented with a skein of very fine thread by a poor rustic maiden who had spun it, and taken occasion of the emperor's visit to Padua to send it to her, and hearing that for holy manners she was a model to the whole village of Montagnono, where she resided, gave the thread to her steward, and ordered him to repair to that village, and to give her as many acres from the land of the state as could be comprised by the thread. To this donation the noble family of Montagnono traced the origin of its greatness †.

But it would be endless to multiply these instances. It may only be remarked, in concluding, that it was not so much by what Catholic women performed themselves, however great their services may have been, as by what they disposed others to perform, that they contributed to the reign of mercy upon earth. What was it, in fact, which determined the will of men to take the direction of blessed mercy? Faith and divine grace, undoubtedly, as we observed in the beginning; but it is evident, also, that there were two other powers, distinct, though intimately associated with impulse divine, in constant co-operation, to promote the same effect; namely, the instructions of the clergy, and, under their influence, the angel-like perfection of the woman's heart; for it was the sweet look, or the image raised by memory of the gentle wife or maiden, making all things else beauteous and dear, that killed the fiend within remorseless breasts, and made them pitiful. The virtues of the maiden made other ladies fair, says the poet of the Nibelungen; and

* Ct. de Montalembert, l'Hist. de S. Eliz. chap. 8.

† Bern. Scardeono de Antiq. Pat. lib. iii. 15.

he might have added, the beauty of the maiden left in the world none but the virtuous—none who had not, at least in ruins, the elements of an angelic nature—none but objects of the deepest, holiest sympathy; for in man communion with this pure being kindled intense zeal to serve and comfort all whose hopes and fears had been studied in one face, that to a youthful mind had always reflected heaven. Ah! what sudden tears and what immense pity would not the thought alone inspire, that she too might have suffered this calamity—that she too might have had her bright innocent fancies thus dissipated! What kind of relief, think you, would be extended to the destitute, while such images passed through the heart? When, as Marsilius Ficinus says, all women under one idea would be one woman? It would be impossible, therefore, to understand the manners of Catholic ages, in regard to tenderness and mercy, without taking into account this great, though subordinate motive; to appreciate which, it is necessary to have formed an adequate idea of the graces that encompassed young Catholic women like St. Elizabeth; and there can never be wanting to the Church some that resemble her: so that you, perhaps, reader, like myself, have no occasion to recur to books for illustration, when it is a question of the exquisite justice and truly divine compassion of a woman's heart in which youth and faith are joined.

Hitherto we have seen, as it were, shadows of the blessed merciful pass separately, one by one. But it is perhaps from a general view of the manners of a Catholic population, and the spirit of its municipal laws, that we can form the most correct idea of the compassionate principle which predominated in society during the middle ages; though indeed, without pursuing our researches any farther, methinks we must already know how to estimate the merit of those modern writers who would persuade us that the people, then in a state of infancy like children, were cruel and insensible to the sufferings of others. But in the face of such witnesses it will be desirable to present direct proof that the interests of the people were always paramount in the estimation of both magistrates and citizens; while in respect to provision for every description of human misery, their institutions were such as no former legislators could have conceived, and such also as no community in modern times, with-

out the aid of Catholicism, can hope to imitate with the slightest chance of success.

"Greatly have we exulted, on hearing of your faith and constancy," says St. Bernard, writing to the citizens of Toulouse. "Our visit to you was short, but, as it appears, not fruitless. The corruptors of your faith are detected, and your manners are no longer in danger of being contaminated by them; so stand, I beseech you, in the Lord. Practise hospitality, receive the stranger, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, redeem the captives, and prove by your works of mercy that you have profited by our admonitions *." You perceive, reader, with what weapons he had armed them against heresy, with what spirit he had inspired a whole city. Of the confraternities, which were one of the immediate results of the direction given to the public mind, I have repeatedly had occasion to speak; and it was not possible to mention them, in reference to any subject, without remarking at the same time their prodigious efforts in administering consolation of every kind to the poor and miserable of every description. At Vicenza there was a confraternity of laics, under the name of St. Jerome, assiduous in pious exercises, while living free in their respective houses. Every week twelve of these men used to go about to visit the sick and prepare them for the sacraments, and comfort them with food and clothing. "There is no merchant," says Ughelli, "citizen or noble, to whom they do not apply, asking alms at every door. Seventy laymen are thus inflamed with the love of God; so that no one in Vicenza need despair of relief †." In the city of Treviso, one of these lay confraternities used every year to enable twenty-five poor maidens to marry ‡.

At Parma, in the year 1493, we find mention of a confraternity like that of the Minerva at Rome, which was instituted with a view of enabling poor and virtuous maidens and young men to marry. To this was attached an oratory, which in course of time became a magnificent church, under the title of the Madonna de la Steccata.

Herbordi, a Hungarian Dominican, and bishop of Bergamo, completed, in 1261, the establishment of the

* Epist. ccxlii.

† Italia Sacra, tom. v. 1029. ‡ Id. tom. v. 467.

society of mercy, which had been commenced by Pinamons de Brembati, a nobleman of that city, the members of which were engaged to provide for the necessities of poor families, and for the education of their children *.

In Catana, De Grossis enumerates twenty-six pious confraternities of laymen, instituted in order to exercise mercy in various ways to the suffering, all of which had a separate church within the precincts of the city; and their offices are well expressed by many of their titles, as the brethren of St. Mary of Mercy—of St. Mary of Consolations—and the brethren of Peace. Those of St. Euplus bound themselves to perform all the charitable offices that are discharged by the Capuchin friars †.

At Padua, in the sixteenth century, there were twenty-eight spiritual colleges, of secular men of all ranks of life, to all of which were annexed vast halls and beautiful chapels, in which sacred ceremonies were religiously performed on stated days. Scardeoneo says, that of these, four are chiefly eminent—those of St. Antony, of St. James, of St. Mary of the Arena, and the School of Charity; the vast revenues of which fraternities, amounting to five thousand gold pieces, are expended religiously by devout laics, in feeding the poor, clothing the indigent, giving marriage portions to maidens, and alms to poor priests. There is also, he adds, "the chamber of the poor," in the episcopal palace, the funds of which, resulting from fines and contributions of the clergy, have been conducted and dispensed gratuitously and studiously for more than thirty years, by Bartholomew Caligarius ‡. But the most celebrated of the confraternities of the middle age was that of the brethren of the Misericordia at Florence, which a recent traveller describes as one of the earliest institutions of charity, and perhaps the only national trait of ancient Florence which now remains. "A pure and primitive simplicity," saith he, "marks every feature and act of these brothers, who in silence and in solitude fulfil their sacred and unostentatious offices. The origin of this fraternity is connected with the great plague in 1348. During its continuance a few

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. lib. 6.

† Catanens. Decachord. ii. 15, in Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ, x.

‡ Bern. Scard. de Antiquit. Patavii, lib. ii. chap. 5.

individuals, firm in purpose and strong in piety, self-devoted, attended on the sick and dying; and the survivors of these chosen few afterwards, taking the monastic habit and order of brethren of Misericordia, assumed for life the performance of these services, which in the hour of sorrow they had voluntarily fulfilled. A black dress, in which the brethren are attired from head to foot, entirely covers the person and conceals the face. The brother, whether of noble or of lowly birth, is equally undistinguished and unknown; and their duties are performed, and charities dispensed, to the noble or beggar with the same indiscriminating ceremonies. Six of the brethren watch continually, and medical aid is always in readiness. Mass is said every morning, and vespers are sung in the evening. On the floor are ranged biers, palls, torches, and dresses. They are summoned to their duties by the solemn tolling of their deep-toned bell, which, when heard in the dead and silent hour of the night, falls on the ear with dismal and appalling sound. The sick are taken to the hospitals, the dead are conveyed to their last homes, and the unclaimed brought to their church on a bier covered with a pall.

Cresolius treats on the burial of the dead as amongst the works of the blessed merciful; and we have elsewhere seen with what solemnity this was performed by the early Christians; so that St. Gregory Nyssen compares the long train of lighted tapers at the funeral procession of Meletius to a river of fire *.

"Another office of the brethren of Misericordia," continues the same writer, "is to visit the prisons and prepare the condemned for death. In this institution the numbers are unlimited; they are not of necessity individually known to each other, but can render themselves intelligible by certain signs and words in any circumstances requiring communication. Their vows enjoin them to be ready, night or day, at the call of sudden calamity, to attend those overtaken by sickness, accident, or assault. A certain number of them are in rotation employed in asking charity—a service which they are obliged to perform barefooted, and in a silent appeal, the rules strictly forbidding the use of speech when engaged on any duty. This call is never left un-

* Ap. Cres. Anth. Sac. 585.

answered, every individual making an offering, were it only of the smallest coin. No fixed period is enjoined for the fulfilment of the vow taken by this order. Many in the highest sphere have sought expiation of sins by assuming it for a longer or shorter time *."

Similar confraternities existed in most cities of Europe. At Evreux, for instance, those brethren who were chiefly employed in burying the dead were bound to assemble in the church of St. James, at the tolling of that bell, and thence proceed, two by two, to carry the body from the house to the grave.

There was a confraternity in the church of Santa Maria de Latina, at Messana, of the date of 1178, consisting of eighty brothers and fifty sisters, who were bound to succour each other, and in case of sickness to administer relief; and each member should have four to watch by him with a lighted lamp, and when dead he should have masses said and alms for his soul†. The fraternity of this kind, at Catana, was called that of St. Ursual, and of Death, or of the Black Brethren ‡.

The present benefit societies in England are but the offspring of the ancient Catholic guilds, which existed ever since the time of the Saxons. By the rules of one established at Atterbury, the brethren bound themselves to find fifteen men who should bring home any member who should fall sick within sixty miles; and if he should die first, to send thirty men to convey him to the place in which he desired to be buried, attending the corpse in an honourable manner, having masses said, and praying devoutly for his soul.

But it is during an interval of public calamity that we can best discern what were the resources of mercy in Catholic ages; and that we may be able to form this estimate, let us hear Paradin, in his simple but graphic style, describe the charity of the citizens of Lyons in the year 1531, when a famine had desolated that country. It is a passage which furnishes a fine illustration of the remark of St. Augustin: "Si angustiantur vasa carnis, dilatentur spatia charitatis §." "During this famine,"

* Bell's Observations on Italy.
† Sicilia Sacra, notit. ii. 398.
‡ Catanens. Decachord.
§ Serm. x.

saith he, "every inhabitant of Lyons, poor as well as rich, did more than his duty; and the citizens seemed inspired with a spirit different from what had ever been seen before. You would have seen the poor give to the poor, and as it were take from his own mouth to put into that of another; so that actually more died from eating to excess, than from hunger: for those who had long borne the famine, on coming into the city, devoured too greedily what they received, and died in consequence. The magistrates met at the convent of St. Bonaventura, and decreed that the poor, both without and within the city, should be conducted to four or five great hospitals provided for them, and that alms should be collected for their support from the devotion of others, who were to be put in mind of what Jesus Christ has recommended to the rich; and for this purpose eight persons were deputed to go about teaching through the city, and saying that to be merciful to the poor was to have pity on oneself, as without charity no one could please God. Great were the alms collected. One good, holy German merchant, who chose that his name should only be written in the book of life, in which the blessed are enregistered, gave five hundred livres; and in three years and a half there were given two thousand three hundred and forty-four livres—a memorable alms. The bishops and abbots would have sold their jewels, and even their chalices, rather than fail the people in this extremity. In fine, the indigence ceased, and the lamentable and lugubrious voice was heard no more. By previous agreement, at the sound of the great bell of the convent of St. Bonaventura, the poor assembled before its gates, to the number of eight thousand persons; and the distribution of bread, soup, and meat, to each one, occupied the persons employed from six o'clock in the morning till two in the afternoon. A little wine was added to the strangers, for whom cabins were erected expressly round the abbey of Æsnay; and an altar was constructed, at which mass was said for them daily. There they were nourished, from Friday the 19th of May, 1531, to Sunday the 9th of July, when the crops began to be cut. Then alms were given to each, and they were dismissed, to go wherever they chose. The poor sweetly obeyed; and after rendering thanks to God, expressed their gratitude to the magistrates of the city. On the 18th of

January it was determined, at a general assembly in the convent of St. Bonaventura to perpetuate the divine and holy work of assisting the poor, and that eight of the chief persons of the city should be deputed every year on the feast of St. Thomas, before Christmas, to conduct the distribution of the alms, without having any other salary but what they would receive from God. Hospices were then built, and a mill added, called the mill of alms, on the Rhone, to grind corn for the poor; and every Sunday afternoon the officers were to sit at the convent, to receive the petitions of the poor. The orphan children were there lodged and educated.

All the sick poor, when dismissed from the Hotel Dieu, receive alms to help them on their journey. Every Sunday, in five different places of the city, alms are distributed; and on the vigils of Easter, Christmas, and the Epiphany, the alms are doubled to each. At the convent, a loaf of bread is given to every passenger. Trunks were placed in the churches, before which an orphan sat during the offices to beseech charity; and similarly on the bridge over the Saone boxes were placed, and a rector sat by it to remind the passengers. The almoner of the poor strangers was to see that they passed on after being relieved, unless in case of sickness. The poor of the town were all registered; and if any one were found begging who had been relieved, he was to be confined in prison, on bread and water. The merchant of alms, who had to purchase the corn, wood, and other provisions for the poor, and to render his accounts every month, and to deliver the proper portions to the respective hospitals, and to be present in his office every Sunday, was to have no other wages but the grace of God. Similarly, the bakers and millers were to have no other wages. All the poor, being registered, were required to be present at the general procession, every year, which proceeded in order from the convent of St. Bonaventura. First walked the four criers of the confraternities, sounding bells; then a poor orphan, carrying a wooden crucifix; afterwards the rest of the orphan children, two by two, the boys singing Fili Dei miserere nobis, and the orphan maidens singing, Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis; then the poor men and women follow, saying their Hours, and praying for their benefactors; after whom walk the four mendicant orders, chaunting the

litany, followed by the officers of justice, the counsellors, and sheriffs, and rectors, and finally by those who are induced through devotion to accompany the procession. When they arrive at the archbishop's palace, each of the poor receives, besides their ordinary alms, three pence tournois. At the end, there is a sermon in the church of St. John, where the people are exhorted to persevere in works of charity. Before this institution, the plague had reigned more or less, without any interruption, during fourteen years in Lyons; whereas now it has wholly disappeared *."

The plague, which so often desolated the cities of Europe in the middle ages, was an occasion to call forth all the energies of the blessed merciful; and their conduct, under such circumstances, constituted a most remarkable fact in the history of mankind. An early example is furnished in the Roman martyrology, which commemorates the holy priests, deacons, and many others, who in the time of the emperor Valerian, during a most cruel pestilence, willingly offered themselves to death to serve the sick, whom the religious faith of the pious is accustomed to venerate as martyrs †: and the annals of the middle age furnish a series of records, attesting the same devotion whenever there was an opportunity for its exercise. Some of these are in a most especial degree remarkable.

At Avignon, the plague of 1348, which is described by Petrarch, called forth the pastoral solicitude and truly pontifical munificence of Clement VI. It was on this occasion that Sienna owed a debt of eternal gratitude to her archbishop, Michael Tolomei ‡, whose personal service was unremitting. Then, too, appeared, to assist and console the afflicted people, St. Catherine of Sienna, as an angel of mercy, by whose careful tendence the lives of many persons were preserved; amongst whom historians mention a certain pious hermit, whom she placed in the hospital of mercy, and two Dominican friars, who had devoted themselves to the service of the sick. St. Bernardine, at that time a secular youth, served them in the

* Paradin, Hist. de Lyons, lib. iii. c. 18.

† Sub Die, 28 Feb.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 12.

hospital of the blessed Virgin. At Florence, the mercy of the citizens in general, who supplied the food, medicines, and service, and whatever could comfort the afflicted, in abundance, was ever memorable. Such an effusion of charity might seem inexplicable, if we were to credit the historians who represent that people in unfavourable colours; but we are prepared to witness it, from discovering the one fact, that they placed all their confidence in their bishop, Angelo Acciajoli, who in so eminent a degree possessed the spirit of Jesus Christ*. During the three years while this fearful Asiatic pestilence lasted, it would be impossible to enumerate all the illustrious members of the different monastic orders who became true martyrs in the exercise of mercy. Simon de Langres, general of the Dominicans, had ordered all the provincials to make choice, in each house, of the monks who were most qualified to render succour to the sick. When the plague began to ravage the territory of Bologna, the blessed Conradin of Brescia, then superior of the Dominican convent of that city, while taking care to preserve the brethren of his house, spared not his own person, but devoted himself to the service of the sick. When it broke out again after the war, he terminated his course in the exercise of the same charity, in 1429. It was in 1448 when the plague again ravaged the city and territory of Florence, that the zeal and charity of St. Antoninus, the archbishop, extorted the admiration of all men. After setting the example in his own personal service, he procured for his imitators and companions in that work the Dominicans of his convent of St. Mark, those of the convent of Fiesoli, and of Santa Maria Novella; the greatest part of whom died in the exercise of this heroic mercy to the afflicted people.

In 1538, a pestilence breaking out in Venice, which swept away great numbers, brother Angelo and another Capuchin friar of the province of Bologna, obtained permission from the provincial to repair thither, where they exercised that ministry of mercy during many months, until the disappearance of the contagion. It was said that the Saviour appeared to these friars while they were at prayer, thanked them for their kindness to the sick poor, and desired them to return to their province to

* Id. tom. ii. liv. 13.

receive their reward. They left Venice immediately, repaired to the provincial, received his benediction, and on the fifteenth day after the vision, as it was foretold to them, rendered their souls to Christ *.

During the ravages of the plague in Rome, in 1522, Silvester Mozolini de Prierio, master of the sacred palace, published a treatise, entitled, On the Care of the Sick and Dying. To add his example to instruction, he tended many persons; and it was in the exercise of this mercy that he died. Notwithstanding the malady to which he had fallen a victim, he was buried in the church of the Minerva †. Yves Mayeuc, bishop of Rennes, in the same century, used to go about from one infected house to another, consoling and administering to the sick when the plague raged in that city ‡.

Peter Paul was an octogenarian friar, in the convent of Dominicans at St. Maximin in Provence, when a pestilence was raging in the neighbourhood. The village of St. Zacharia had just lost its curate, and the inhabitants were dying in great numbers. This holy man prevailed on the superior to permit him to visit it, on condition of his finding some other priest of the house willing to accompany him, which was instantly fulfilled; but when the two friars were seen proceeding to the gate of the town, the people suspected their intention; and as they ascribed their own exemption from the malady to the presence of that holy man among them, they absolutely refused to let them pass, and they were constrained to abandon their intention §.

In the plague which ravaged Italy in 1528, Mathieu de Bassio and twelve other Capuchins of Camerino applied to Ludovicus, the superior of the convent in that city, for permission to serve the sick. That holy friar addressed them in these words: "Dearest brethren in Christ, there is nothing which more convinces men of the excellence of the Christian religion, than when they see us lay down our lives for them, and hasten to give them succour in their last moments, when destitute of all things else; moreover, by so doing, we are made imitators of Christ, who excites us to mercy, saying, By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1538.
† Touron, tom. iii. liv. 24. ‡ Id. tom. iv. 25.
§ Id. tom. v. liv. 40.

another. Those who despise death for the salvation of others and the charity of Christ, differ not from those who lay down their lives for the faith. Therefore I am filled with joy on beholding you thus excited to win the crown of martyrdom. Lo! the axe is laid at the root of the tree. Pallida mors æquo pede pulsat pauperum tabernas, Regumque turres. But if death should find us intent on these offices of charity, it will only transmit us to the possession of a better life, and of an eternal kingdom." The superior then reminded them of certain rules which, on a similar occasion in 1523, he had found most useful to himself and others ; which prescribed that they should cast all thought of their lives on God, and seek nothing but his honour and the spiritual and corporal good of the sufferers, that they should not neglect their own spiritual exercises, that they should be mindful ever of the presence of God, that they should devote part of the night to the divine praises, and each morning, before the rising of the sun, commend their sick to the divine mercy in the sacrifice of the altar, that no friar should go forth alone, and that on no account any trust or deposit or promise should be accepted from the sick persons or their friends. Then, having received his benediction, these friars repaired in the first instance to the duchess Catherine Ciboa, and acquainted her with their intention ; and when that illustrious princess, who had been sunk in consternation at the general calamity, beheld their countenances and heard them speak, she began, we are told, to revive, and seemed to breathe again. The effect which their presence and ministry wrought upon the people was truly divine: the city seemed to rise from the grave; the poor were relieved with the abundance of the rich; no sick person was left without attendance and consolation, and the blessed mysteries, no dying man without a friendly hand to close his eyes, no dead body without a minister to wash and adorn it with decency, and commit it to a holy grave. Who could enumerate the conversions that were then made, the ill-acquired goods that were restored, the debts that were for ever cancelled ? And amidst all this continued danger, not one of these hooded men of mercy perished; so that the crown was wanting to the soul, though the soul was not wanting to the crown *.

* Annales Capucinorum, 105—8.

Bartholomew de Martyribus, archbishop of Bragua, during the plague of 1568, received letters from the young king, Don Sebastian, conjuring him to leave that city while it lasted, and adding that his life was necessary for the welfare of the whole kingdom; but he replied, that as a pastor he was bound to offer his life for his flock; and accordingly there he remained, encouraging the magistrates, directing the police, and administering almost incessantly with his own hands to the sick *. The exertions of the Dominicans in Lisbon, on that occasion, corresponded with the highest expectations that could have been formed of their mercy.

During the great pestilence of Italy, which first broke out in Rome in 1575, the bishop of Imola, Vincent Herculani, distinguished himself in the same manner as St. Charles Borromeo at Milan; his presence was said even to console the dying. The whole diocese, as well as the city of Imola, beheld his personal exertions; for he went to seek the peasant or the shepherd in his cabin, as well as the rich noble in his palace. It was in the following year that St. Charles, at Milan, gave to his flock that example of mercy which is so celebrated. The holy prelate had a peculiar esteem for the order of Capuchins; and by his directions, Francis, vicar of the province, and James, father guardian of the city, sent letters through all the Milanese states, exciting the friars to that pious labour, who were not slow to obey or wanting in voluntary zeal; for the letter was hardly read in each convent, when nearly all the brethren pressed forward to offer their lives; so that it was necessary to limit the number of elected from each house to twelve; and the names of all these devoted men, many of whom were distinguished preachers, may be read in the annals of their order. Father Philip, of Milan, was appointed to govern the great lazaret without the city, in which there were about one thousand men devoted to serve the sick; and as he rendered his soul to God within a month, Father Paul Salodiensis succeeded him. The friars spared not themselves, night and day, preparing the beds, giving food, and administering the sacraments, and intrepidly discharging every office of fraternal charity to the sick, the

* Touron, tom. iv. liv. 31.

dying, and the dead, until the cessation of the plague after twenty months *.

In the year 1580, in the space of four months, about sixty thousand persons perished by pestilence in Paris. At that time, Father Peter, guardian of the convent of Capuchins in that city, and five of the friars, consecrated themselves to assist the sick; and of these, three fell in the discharge of their ministry. The friars were joined in this work by the most religious fathers of the society of Jesus, of whom some passed to Christ with the same praise †.

At Lyons, Cardinal du Plessis de Richelieu, the archbishop, when the plague ravaged that city in 1635, daily exposed his life for his flock, like a good shepherd, visiting the sick and administering the sacraments ‡.

Peter de Tapia, in 1649, refused the archbishopric of Valentia, and shortly after consented to be translated from Segovia to the see of Cordova, for the reason that the plague was raging in the latter diocese at the time. Before setting out to it, he told all his domestics and officers that he would send them to their respective homes if they had not courage to follow him, and they all with one voice replied that they were ready to follow him to death. On arriving at Cordova, after taking possession of the cathedral, his first visit was to the hospital of St. Lazarus; and twice every week he visited the other hospitals of the city §.

In fact, every country and almost every city had traditions respecting the heroic charity of some of its great men, during similar days of visitation. The city of Villefranche commemorated her illustrious magistrate, John de Pomairole, and her Father Ambrose, of the Franciscan order, Marseilles her compassionate and intrepid bishop, at the head of Capuchins, Observantines, Jesuits, Carmelites, Augustinians, Dominicans, and Trinitarians—all affectionate in the discharge of their duty, —as having profited by these afflictions to win the beatitude of the merciful. At Marseilles the bishop was every day in the streets, traversing all quarters, visiting

* Annales Capucinorum, 793—5. † Id. 852.
‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. i.
§ Touron, tom. v. liv. 36.

the highest and lowest classes with the tenderest devotion; and in a few weeks, the sum he distributed amounted to twenty-five thousand crowns.

But it would be endless to multiply such records. I shall only remind thee, reader, in conclusion, that here, again, we have been traversing a soil which owes its riches and its fruits exclusively to Catholicism. If any one should doubt this proposition, let him refer to the history of the plague in London, in the year 1665, and the spectacle there presented will oblige him to admit it; for nothing was wanting, on that occasion, that human wisdom or virtue could supply, neither the courage of magistrates, nor the liberal donations of the absent; but there was not the charity of the blessed merciful to inspire the public arrangements to meet the calamity; there was no friar to console the dying; there was no bishop to revive the courage of the people, and to distribute amongst them the wealth of an affluent see; there were no sisters of charity to tend the sick, no brothers of mercy to give the dead burial; but in their place men heard of acts of "charitable relief," in pursuance of which every house in which any person was attacked by the plague was immediately shut up and converted into a prison, where the sound and the sick were left to perish together; and if any person should have visited one of the sick, or entered into any infected house, the house which he inhabited was to be, in like manner, shut up; which contemporary writers inform us "was counted a very cruel and unchristian method," as many people perished in these miserable confinements, shrieking out dismally and in vain for assistance, who might otherwise have escaped. And indeed the details which are given on this head exceed all that can be imagined of despotism on the part of government, and of cool barbarity on the part of those who were its agents, many of whom were slain by the exasperated people. Instead of hearing of the tender and heroic solicitude of nuns, innumerable frightful stories, we are assured, went about of the cruel behaviour of nurses and watchmen, and of their hastening on the fate of those they tended or guarded in their sickness, by starving or smothering them. Instead of the friar's sermon, pathetic yet inspiring, so as to make men forget their danger and embrace the cross with

confidence, and believe that the sufferings of that moment were not worthy to be compared with the joy which was reserved for them, dismal discourses were heard, filling the people with despair, and not guiding them to cry for mercy, ministers and preachers of all professions erecting altar against altar, whilst, on the one hand, fanatics ran naked through the streets, crying out in a manner horrible, so as to terrify the people to the last degree, and, on the other, blasphemy was echoing from houses of assembly, and diabolic language addressed to passengers in the street, men talking atheistically, and making a jest at the word judgment of God, and insulting the mourners, who lamented the fate of friends. Instead of the constancy and affection of Catholic families, we hear of all servants being turned off in these days of calamity, and left friendless and helpless, without employment and without habitation, so as to augment the number of the poor to an extent most fearful and horrible, Defoe expressly saying, that this was a time when no one had room to pity the distresses of others, that all compassion was gone, self-preservation appearing to be the first law, children flying from their parents, and parents doing the like to their children. Instead of the asylums opened for all the indigent by monks and prelates, we read of only two pest-houses, to which no one was admitted unless money was given, or security for money. Finally, instead of the solemn processions in thanksgiving to God, on the cessation of the pestilence, and churches built, as at Venice, to be served by the friars who survived, we behold the triumphant entry of the ministers who had fled during the danger, and who now returned, ejected the unlicensed preachers, who had taken possession of their pulpits in their absence, and harassed them with their penal laws; while, for holy melody and devout emblazonment, we are told to listen to the scornful taunts of the people against their clergy, and to mark the verses and scandalous reflections upon them, which are placed upon the church doors, setting forth "Here is a pulpit to be let or sold." *

A recent biographer of Luther observes, that although he acted himself after other maxims, his words form a

* De Foe's Hist. of the Plague.

disagreeable contrast with the charity and devotion of the Catholic clergy. Truly, he might well make the remark; for, hear the reformer instructing one of his pastors—"It is sufficient if the people go to communion thrice or four times a year publickly. The communion given separately to individuals would become a burden too heavy upon the ministers, especially in time of pestilence. Besides, one ought not to render the Church, with her sacraments, the slave of every one; above all, of those who despise her, and yet who desire that on every occasion she should be always ready for them who do nothing ever for her." What is most remarkable in this passage, perhaps, is its conformity with the language which has continued to be uttered under similar circumstances by those who still advocate the general principles of that revolution. But, assuredly, however great and afflicting the contrast might be, there was no ground for surprise to those who took a philosophic view of the two sides, and who considered how every part of Catholicism was jointed in, as it were, and cemented together. That new form which death had assumed, and that spirit of penance which we beheld in the fourth book, were elements which entered largely into the composition of the blessed merciful; and with these the self-styled reformers were not well provided, as they confessed themselves: for, on occasion of the plague being at Magdebourg, we find Luther writing as follows to one of his friends:—"I had experience some years past of the terror which you describe as prevailing at present; and I am astonished to see that the more we preach life in Jesus Christ, the more does the fear of death increase amongst the people. Whether it be that before, under the reign of the Pope, a false hope of life diminished for them the fear of death, and that now the true hope of life being placed before their eyes, they feel how weak is nature to believe in the conqueror of death; or, whether it be that God tempts us by this weakness, and permits Satan amidst this terror to take more force and courage, while we lived in the faith of the Pope, we were like drunken men, asleep or mad, taking death for life, not knowing what death was, or the wrath of God. But, now that the light has shone, and that the wrath of God is better known, nature hath awakened from sleep and folly. That is the reason why they fear death more than

formerly *." Unfortunately, however, for the plausibility of this explanation, it appears that the guides were not exempt from the general influence in this respect, as their chief admitted in answer to the Doctor Jonas, who had exclaimed on one occasion, Ah, how magnificently does St. Paul speak of his death! adding, I cannot, however, believe him. When he replied, It seemed to me, also, that St Paul himself could not think on this subject with as much force as he could speak; I myself, unhappily, cannot on this article believe as strongly as I can preach, or speak and write as strongly as other men imagine I can believe †.

You perceive, reader, what a space retrograde had been already passed by these men. Alas! alas! whether more they spoke on this head, or afterwards were mute, I know not: they had gone already so far back; yet thus much I read, and in remembrance treasured it. Let us return to the men of faith and mercy,—to the people that were in a state of childhood, as we are now told, who, according to the remarkable expression of the chief apostate, "knew not what death was, nor the wrath of God."

I have purposely avoided detaining the reader with evidence drawn from the ancient testamentary records connected with the charity of men to the poor in ages of faith; for, though on many accounts the information which may be derived from an examination of wills and charters of foundation is highly curious and worthy of an historian's attention, documents of this kind demonstrating what were the opinions of men in the middle ages, respecting the manner in which the poor might be best assisted, and clearly indicating by what works they believed their own merit could be increased, and the greatest benefit conferred on their posterity, yet the principle of posthumous charity was of so little comparative importance, when living manners were under the influence of faith and love, that our attention need not be formally directed to examine its action and effects. The holy fathers, as well as the scholastic and mystic philosophers of the middle ages, had warned men from being deluded by the opinion that they might fulfil their obligations to the poor without shewing mercy during their lives.

* Michelet, Mem. de Luth. ii. 68. † Id. ii. 165.

"I will leave my riches to the poor after my death." That is, adds St Basil, you will become charitable when you shall be no longer among men. When with the dead you will be the friend of your brethren. While alive, devoted to pleasure, you hardly deigned to regard the poor. After death, what actions can you perform? There can be no more good works after life. You engage to be beneficent, by writing and on a tablet; but how can you be sure that even this power will be left to you? or if you should have made a will, that the transposition of a letter may not suffice to have it set aside after your death? Your conduct is as absurd as it is criminal. While you lived you preferred yourself to the precepts of God, and now you will leave what you cannot retain to God! Had you been immortal, you would never have had regard to his precepts. Be not deceived, God is not to be mocked. A dead man is not led to the altar at the offering *.

"Note well," says Guy de Roye, in his Doctrinal de Sapience, "that it is better for you to give during your life one penny for the honour of God than a mountain of gold after your death. On a dark road you do not place the lantern behind your back. There are persons who, if they have corn, wine, cheese, fruits, or other provisions, or old vestments, or shoes, will leave them there to rot rather than give them to their poor neighbours, or to the poor for God. It is avarice and grievous sin to keep things till they can serve no one. Delay not to give till your dying day, when you can carry away nothing." The great Christian orators of later times have only therefore expressed in language more artificial, though perhaps less effective, the truth on this head universally taught in the middle ages. Bourdaloue said nothing new when he asked, "Has this man given much at his death?" and added, in reply, "Nay, he has given nothing, but he has left somewhat; and he has left nothing but what he could not retain: he has kept it till the last moment; and if he could carry it away with him, neither God nor the poor would have had any part in it. What profit is there in such alms? For it is of faith, Christians, that all your alms after death have no virtue to save you. They may affect the condition of your soul in purgatory,

* St. Basil Hom. Cont. Disc.

but as for salvation, these works after life are barren works, because the affair of salvation is already decided, and the sentence is without appeal *."

This chapter hath exceeded the due limits, but how important are the disclosures which we have derived from it! Here we have seen whole generations impressed with a practical conviction, that neither fortune hath any thing better than the power, nor nature than the will to show mercy to as many men as possible,—and, what should move a true lover of wisdom still more, whole generations taught to consider and understand profoundly all the deep mysteries of Providence in the order of rich and poor, and all the secrets of evangelic grace in the salvation of both by charity. Perhaps some hapless wanderer through the wastes of modern speculation may be awakened by these memorials of ancient faith to a sense of the position in which the propagators of error have placed him; for here he has seen enough to be convinced, if he do not act treacherously towards himself, that the spirit of men in Catholic ages was to acknowledge no other religion as true and undefiled before God, but what the Apostle describes, " to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep themselves unspotted from the world;" which is only expressed in more detail in that rule of St. Benedict, to the influence of which so many hearts, under a secular habit, were daily subjected, as in the instances expressly recorded of Lewis the Emperor, and Cosmo de Medicis, and which commands all subject to it, pauperes recreare, nudum vestire, infirmum visitare, mortuum sepelire, in tribulatione subvenire, dolentem consolari, a sæculi actibus se facere alienum †. Such was the code of the middle ages.

Ah, where is the reader now with breast so steeled against all stings of conscience and salutary fear of God's terrific judgment, as to feel any longer uppermost in his thoughts the phrases of men, who talk of dark ages, superstition, and ignorance, when alluding to Catholic states, to generations which feared nothing but that judgment, and which sought with such acuteness to avert it by charity to the poor! Fearful, though sublime and admirable task, would that it had been in abler hands, to

* Bourdaloue, Serm. sur l'Aumône.

† Reg. S. Ben. c. 4.

expose a history comprising sixteen centuries, of which the most pervading and striking phenomenon must remain for ever inexplicable to human genius, however penetrating, without one key to render it intelligible, and that the parable of Dives, and the words read in the Gospel, with which Christ will judge those on his right hand and those on his left, in presence of the hosts of heaven!

CHAPTER IX.

To describe all the various institutions of mercy which existed during the middle ages, would be an endless task; and to impart an adequate idea of their merits, by citing didactive pieces, without, as it were, a local and minute inspection of what was established, is impossible; for it is in such works that one perceives the truth of what an ancient French writer remarks, that the heart is more ingenious than the understanding. Charity rendered the rich man and the poor like Ulysses, πολυμήχανος *, fertile and subtle in expedients; not indeed like the Homeric hero, to extricate himself from the perils of life, but to remove or alleviate the multiplied wants and calamities of his fellow-creatures. Amor Jesu nobilis, ad magna operanda impellit, et ad desideranda semper perfectiora excitat. In cities, therefore, in deserts, amidst which cloistered brethren dwelt in happier days, wherever we direct our steps, within the realms that faith once illumined, Catholicism has left some memorial, by which we know that the blessed merciful have passed,—some monument, vital with mind, attesting the subtle action of a most loving heart, which, to an ordinary traveller, may seem only some rude wall, perhaps, or broken trophy, but on which a poet, with the tender penetration of a Wordsworth, may describe his fastening "an eye tear-glazed." Johnson used to say, that the real criterion of civilization consisted in the degree of provision made for the happiness of the poor; and if that proposition be admitted, we must conclude that the middle ages were more

* Od. i. 285.

entitled to the praise to which the modern communities lay claim, than any other period in the history of man. To win the beatitude of the merciful, there were, it must be remembered, other virtues required in regard to the poor besides ministering to their corporal necessities; and truly, in fulfilling the spiritual works of mercy towards them, the devotion of men in the middle ages was admirable, and such as can never be sufficiently praised; but having already had occasion to witness their respect for the poor, their meekness in relation to them, their readiness to console, their assiduity to counsel and instruct them, it will not be necessary to give any further illustrations; though, were time and space allowed, it would not be an unpleasant field for reminiscences. Poets who sing so often the interceding grace of a St. Elmo, to whose prayers the Spanish and Portuguese sailors commend their bark in tempests, would not be ungrateful to an historian who should remind them that this saint was known in history as St. Peter Goncalez, who had exchanged the honours and pleasures of a court for the privilege of teaching the Catechism to the poor children of the fishermen and sailors on the coasts of the Peninsula *. One might write a large book upon the education which was given to the poor in the middle ages by the charity of the rich. The parents of the celebrated Lewis of Grenada were indigent, obscure persons, but the Marquis de Mondejar supplied them with means for educating their son †. Similar instances are innumerable.

In the sixteenth century, in the public grammar school of Padua, founded by Annibal Rugerio, the boys and youths of the city were taught gratuitously both Greek and Latin ‡. But there yet remains unnoticed an order of facts more striking still, as attesting the passage of the blessed merciful upon earth, to the examination of which we must now proceed. If we open the annals of any city, and examine the rise and progress of its charitable foundations, we cannot but feel surprise and admiration at the prodigious and persevering activity of the principle which has produced such effects. What a series of institutions, directed to some purpose of love and mercy, is

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.

† Id. tom. iv. liv. 30.

‡ Bern. Scard. De Antiq. Patavii, lib. ii. 5.

presented in the history of Paris alone; and what a multitude of all ranks and estates of men co-operated with one heart and mind to conceive, establish, and perpetuate them! Kings and queens, princes, nobles, bishops, priests, magistrates, citizens, tradesmen, and even mendicants, all conspired in the same direction, and with such comprehensive and subtle skill, that no kind of misery was forgotten, or left unprovided with the fitting means to remove or alleviate it. De Bourgueville, speaking of the charitable foundations at Caen, observes, that posterity will be able easily to judge that their predecessors were very faithful to God, charitable to the poor, and firm in their hope in his mercy, when it will remark the foundations which they have left to the value every year of three thousand livres.

No ancient legislator ever proposed a hospital for the poor and infirm, or a hospice for the stranger and destitute. When peasants, or any wanderers from the country, came into Rome, if they did not leave it after the market, they had no resource but to pass the night in the arcades, and about the forum, or in the porches before the temples. The Greeks were ignorant even of the name of an hospital; the word "nosocomium" was first employed by St. Jerome and St. Isidore. It is true, in the Prytaneus at Athens there was provided subsistence for the wives and children of those who had suffered for their country, but there was no asylum in sickness. The infirm and sick are wholly overlooked in the institutions of Lycurgus, as in those of all other legislators of Greece, although the father of medicine, Hippocrates, with a solemn oath swears, that he will visit all his life the poor gratuitously. In ancient Rome there was the same neglect and indifference in regard to the poor. Numa made no provision for them; and during the republic the bounties of the state were given only to those who were in health. The emperors were not more humane, though it is true certain baths, or thermes, were consecrated to the use of the people. The rich used to give daily to their poor clients the sportula, of which Juvenal so often speaks; but there was no public asylum for the poor, and in sickness they were left to expire under their own miserable tiles, which afforded no shelter from sun or rain. The slaves were left unburied; so that Horace speaks of the Esquiline hill as whitened with the number of bones

collected by carniverous birds. Cato, whom Plutarch praises for living familiarly with his slaves as if his companions in the labours of husbandry, never thought of providing for them in sickness or old age; and in his book of instructions, De Re Rusticâ, he prescribes, as an important point of domestic economy, to sell off old slaves, in order not to nourish, he says, useless persons. Neither the religion nor the philosophy of Greece and Rome tended to comfort the poor. The divinities were cruel; the Stoic affected to despise the sufferings of the indigent; the Epicurean took no thought of them. In this respect Paganism was everywhere the same. Throughout the vast regions of Mogul, India, and China, the use of hospitals is unknown to this day. In no country did Christianity find such institutions existing. It seems incredible, though it is most true, that it was only in the thirteenth century the custom of putting to death old infirm persons was abolished in Poland by Albert the Great, who was sent there as legate of the Holy See, so little prepared were those nations for constructing vast palaces expressly for the aged and infirm. In respect to institutions of mercy, all countries which had not beheld the light of faith were equally destitute. It seems unaccountable, therefore, that so grave an historian as Niebuhr should seize the occasion, when speaking of building the Lateran hospital, in the twelfth century, to denominate that epoch, the midnight of barbarism at Rome. Truly it was a blessed night which beheld such foundations, even though their walls may have been built with fragments of statues, and other works of Grecian art! The history of their rise and progress can be traced in few words. In the year 380 the first hospital in the West was founded by Fabiola, a devout Roman lady, without the walls of Rome. St. Jerome says expressly, "that this was the first of all *." And he adds, "that it was a country house, destined to receive the sick and infirm, who before used to lie stretched on the public ways." The Pilgrim's hospital at Rome, built by Pammachius, became also celebrated. In 330, the priest Zotichus, who had followed Constantine to Byzantium, established in that city, under his protection, a hospice for strangers and pilgrims. This house was built on the plan of the hos-

* Ad Oceanum de Fabiolâ.

pice at Jerusalem, which Hircan had erected there one hundred and fifty years before Christ, in expiation for having opened and plundered the tomb of David, and in order to convert the riches he had found there to a benevolent purpose; but it is supposed by Mongez that this hospice was only opened during the feast of the passover. St. Isidore says, in his Etymologies, "that this was the first ξενοδοκεῖον, or hospice, for strangers." St. Basil, who founded the first hospitals of Asia, mentions a house for the reception of the sick and of travellers, built on a spot formerly uninhabited, near the city of Cesarea, which became afterwards the ornament of the country, and like a second city. St. Basil used frequently to visit it, in order to instruct and console the poor. St. Chrysostom built several hospitals at Constantinople. Justinian, in the year 350, erected at Jerusalem the famous hospital of St. John; and his example was followed by his successors with such zeal, that according to Ducange, in his Commentary on the Byzantine History, there were thirty-five establishments of charity in that city alone: there was the Nosocomium, or asylum for the sick; the Xenodochium, for pilgrims and strangers; the Ptochium, or hospice for the poor; the Brephotrophium, or house of education for poor children; the Orphanotrophium, or house for orphans; the Gerocomium, or asylum for the aged; the Pandochreum, or gratuitous inn; and the Morotrophium, or house for lunatics.

St. Augustin says, "that hospitals have their origin in the truth of religion." In a material sense, too, they owed their existence to the ministers of religion; for, in fact, the first hospitals were the bishops' houses *. But as the episcopal resources proved insufficient, the Church decreed, that the canons should give the tenths of their revenues and oblations to maintain the sick poor. In early times the hospitals were always under the direction of priests: thus St. Isidore presided over that at Alexandria, in the time of the Patriarch Theophilus. It was determined by Charlemagne, in 816, that at each see one of the canons should always govern the hospital; and that this asylum should be everywhere near the cathedral, in order that the clergy might easily visit it. The conse-

* Sainte-Foix, Essais Historiques sur Paris, tom. ii. Jaillot, Recherches sur Paris, i. 103.

quence of this early discipline can be seen at Paris, where the Hotel Dieu is in the place before the cathedral, and at Brussels, where the great hospital adjoins the church of St. John, which is one of the oldest in that city. Lanfranc, and many other great English prelates, are recorded to have signalized the first year of their episcopacy by erecting houses for the reception of the sick. However, in subsequent times, it became often necessary to change this locality, for in consequence of the confined space which resulted, and the increase of cities, the physical disadvantages in consequence were found to be great. Tenon, in his elaborate work on the Hospitals of Paris, proves that, in consequence of the circumstances resulting from its position, the mortality in the Hotel Dieu at Paris, in the last century, was greater than in any other hospital. In a very early age, however, hospitals were not exposed to this inconvenience of locality, for churches being rarely built within the walls of cities, their site was, consequently, in every respect advantageous. Most Basilicas, as we before remarked, were raised over the tombs of martyrs, which were always without the walls, as it was formerly forbidden to bury bodies within their enclosure *. The clergy, however, were not the sole authors of these monuments of mercy: many hospitals owed their foundation to lay persons. Pammachius established, at his own expense, a hospital at Porto; and St. Gallican, a Roman patrician and consul, who suffered martyrdom under Julian, after enjoying the honours of a triumph, and the friendship of the great Constantine, might be seen serving the sick poor, and washing the pilgrims' feet, in the hospital which he had built at Ostia †, to which place he retired, along with Hilarion, in consequence of hearing that there were collected there many thousand miserable persons without assistance.

It was by similar establishments that the piety of the first French kings became distinguished. Still the religious connection was always seen. Thus, though Paris was become the seat of empire, yet in consequence of the antiquity of the church of Lyons, Childebert erected the first hospital in that city. The fifth Council of Orleans, in the middle of the sixth century, speaks of this hospital

* Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 230.

† Clavareau, Mém. sur les Hôpit. 29.

as surpassing all others in extent and salubrity. Rheims and Autun pretend that their hospitals are of equal antiquity, but it is thought, without sufficient ground. Soon after these three foundations, about the year 638, Paris enjoyed a similar advantage. The statutes of this hospital, composed in 1220, are still extant, from which it appears, that great attention was paid to the morals of the persons who served it. The capitularies of succeeding monarchs bear testimony to their zeal in multiplying these great establishments The eighth and ninth centuries were particularly distinguished in the west for the number of hospitals and other institutions of mercy, which were founded. At that time every monastery had a house adjoining it for the poor and the stranger *. Thus, in the ninth century, St. Anselm, Abbot of Nonantula, built a Xenodochium, with a chapel served by monks, where the poor were daily nourished, and where every person that presented himself was received to hospitality, and fed; and on all the kalends, two hundred poor people used to be entertained †. The sick were even frequently lodged in a building adjoining, for whom the monks prepared medicines, as we find in Italy at the present day, where the dispensary is always in a monastery. The Senior, who explains to a disciple the rule of St. Antony, reminds him that it is the duty of monastic superiors to receive old sick men, blind and paralytic, and to love them, although they can render no other service to the house but what is spiritual ‡. And that the western monks in later times were anxious to relieve and console the sick and infirm, is proved by many records. Orderic Vitalis says, "that originally the abbey of Ouches nourished seven lepers, each of whom received daily a portion equal to that of a monk §." Walafried Strabo mentions, in his Life of St. Othmar, Abbot of St. Gall, that this holy man built a hospital for lepers near the monastery, and that at night he used often to walk to it, in order to comfort and tend these poor creatures. Frequently when he went abroad he used to return without a tunic or cap, having given what he wore to the poor. In 1377 there was founded a hospital for the sick near

* Joan. Devoti Instit. Canonic. lib. ii. tit. xii. §. 1.
† Vita ejus apud Mabil. acta S. Ord. S. Bened. iv. 1.
‡ Exposit. Sent. S. Antonii Ab. § Hist. Nor. liv. iii.

the great abbey of Auriliac, in the diocese of Clermont *. During the Pontificate of Innocent III. the Count of Blancoburg founded, adjoining the Cistercian abbey of St. Michael, in the diocese of Halberstad, a hospital for the sick and poor, in honour of the Holy Ghost; and the Pope, in his letter to the Abbot, says, "our dear son, the noble count, in giving a portion of his best land for this purpose, and one hundred marks of silver, desires that the hospital should be constructed, not in his, but in our name †." At the abbey of Monte Casino also there was a hospital in ancient times, the support of which was one of the works of piety for which that monastery had been celebrated ‡. About the year 1240 there was erected, in front of the Benedictine monastery of St. Maximinus, in the suburbs of Treves, under the Abbot Henry a Broich, and with the unanimous consent of the whole convent, a vast hospital, which was dedicated under the invocation of St. Elizabeth, to which the said abbot and convent granted the third part of all the revenues and goods of the abbey at that time, which was thenceforth for ever to be devoted to the sole use of the poor, the weak, and the sick; which foundation was, at their petition, confirmed by pontifical diploma of Innocent IV. and enriched to an incredible extent by letters of indulgence from Henry and Arnold, Archbishop of Treves, granted to all the faithful who, through Christian charity, should make donations to the hospital §. The rector was always chosen from the bosom of the convent, but the Counts of Manderscheid were the temporal advocates and patrons. The abbatial constitutions, during the fourteenth and two succeeding centuries, evince the greatest zeal to provide against the possibility of any abuse in the employment of its funds: the words are, "We beseech and exhort our successors, the abbots and brethren in the bowels of Christ and of his holy Mother, to take care that the goods of this hospital, magnificently endowed, shall be always applied according to the foundation to the use of the poor and sick, and never alienated for any other purpose; but if the contrary should ever take place, we execrate the perpetrators, and desire that they may be struck with anathema and excommunication." In 1442, when the

* Gallia Christ. tom. ii. 499. † Inn. III. Epist. lib. xi. 69.
‡ Id. Epist. lib. xii. 182. § Hist. Hospit. S. Elisab. Trev.

monastery was obliged to yield some of its possessions on pledge, the letters expressly except the revenues due from them to the hospital; and in 1610, when Attilius, the apostolic nuncio, visited it, the charter of his visitation provides, that the hospital should continue to be well governed, and its goods applied, as before, to the use of the poor and sick. Later in the seventeenth century, however, abuse crept in, so that the Abbot, Alexander Henn, styled in the Chronologia of the Abbots, the ornament of his order, who was elected in 1672, lamented bitterly the neglected state of the hospital, and ascribed to it all the calamities which had befallen the abbey during the forty years preceding. "Christ our Lord," he says, "will send to eternal fire those who have neglected to feed him hungry, to clothe him naked, and to visit him in sickness. The bread of the indigent is their life, and he who defraudeth the poor is a man of blood. I also, during many years, converted to the use and utility of the monastery certain annual returns and emoluments of the hospital of St. Elizabeth, including its tithes in many places, which it would be tedious to mention: sed O Deus, Deus meus, ignosce mihi, quia ignorans hæc ego feci." Such are the words of this holy abbot, addressed to his successors, written in his own hand, in a book entitled "Calamitates Monasterii S. Maximini;" and concluding thus: "Auxiliare et exhortare ad succurrendum." Of such abuse, indeed, we find notice in earlier times; for there is a letter of St. Bernard to the Abbess of Faverney, in the diocese of Besançon, exhorting her to pay diligent attention to the support and defence of the hospital house of God, which is served by the brethren of the monastery under her government, and to restore whatever funds may have been at any time alienated from it by preceding abbesses *.

It appears that in ancient times even the secular clergy used to give medicinal advice to the poor; for at Paris they used to receive patients, we are told, at the entrance of the cathedral below the tower, on the right hand †. We observed before, that as physicians, however, the clergy could not generally act, consistent with the observance of ecclesiastical discipline. Pope Martin IV. prohi-

* Epist. ccexci. † Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. 1.

bited all monks, excepting Carthusians, from studying medicine, though it was still permitted them to supply medicines; and sometimes even in respect to giving advice, there were exceptions made in favour of certain individuals. Dom Nicolas Alexandre Benedictine, of the congregation of St. Maur, published two works on Medicine; but, as is remarked, his only object in so doing was to benefit the poor *. Clerks and monks giving advice and medicine gratuitously to indigent persons for the love of God, were subject, however, at no time, to ecclesiastical penalties †.

From the reign of Charles-le-Chauve, the distinction is made between royal hospitals and those that were of other origin. In 1274 there was an ordinance which prescribed that, every day during the travels of the king, the tenth part of the bread supplied to the court should be given to the nearest hospital. St. Louis, by this decree, only confirmed the immemorial custom of his predecessors ‡.

The civil power co-operated with the founders of these houses of mercy, and granted them privileges and exemptions. Novario says, that when it was proposed in a certain university to erect a hospital to receive sick poor, and to shelter wretched strangers, he gave his judgment, that a certain citizen could be compelled to sell his house for that purpose, as it was a pious work, in favour of the miserable, and consequently to be preferred not only to private but also to public utility §." In our day the revolted citizens of Lyons, who had been wounded in the church of St. Nicaise, were dragged out of the Hotel Dieu by the hands of the police; but in the middle ages, hospitals as well as churches enjoyed the right of sanctuary. The Holy See, yielding to pious vows and just prayers, was accustomed to receive under its protection the hospitals of the sick in all parts of the world ||. We have the letters of Pope Innocent III. acceding to the prayer of the master and brethren of the hospital of St. Sanson, at Constantinople, who had presented a petition for this

* Bibliothèque Hist. et Crit. des Auteurs de la Cong. de St. Maur.

† Novarii Tract. de Privileg. Miserab. Person. 162.

‡ Mongez, Dissertation sur l'Antiquité des Hôpitaux.

§ Novarii Tractat. de Priv. Miserab. Person. 36.

|| Innocent III. Epist. lib. xiii. 22.

purpose *; and conferring the same privilege on the hospital of St. Thomas Martyr, and St. Antony at Caen †.

In point of historic interest the hospital of every city ranked in third degree after the church and monastery, to which, as we have seen, its origin might generally be traced. Like them, also, it had even its chronicle and its records, from which one might derive many beautiful and affecting narratives connected with the mercy and tenderness of the ancient Catholic manners. The origin of the great hospital for lepers at Paris was a collection of little cabins, in which they were lodged between Paris and St. Denis. Odo de Dueil, a monk of St. Denis, relates, as an eye-witness, that in the year 1147, when King Louis-le-Jeune came to St. Denis to take up the standard before going to the crusade, he stopped on his way, entered into these cabins, and visited all the lepers, attended only by two persons ‡.

In the history of such foundations there are many details worthy of remark. The condition and character of the founders, the cause which first inspired them with the idea, the object they had in view, the means with which they were provided, are all circumstances that can furnish matter for interesting investigation. Let us take a glance at the records of some houses of this kind.

Historians are in general agreed, that the Hotel Dieu of Paris was founded about the year 660, by St. Landry, Bishop of Paris; and that Erchinvald, Count of Paris, took part in this good work, and gave up his own palace to form it §. Philip Augustus is the first of the kings whose generosity towards it is mentioned by history. In 1227 St. Louis bestowed such favours upon it, that he has been regarded as its second founder; but persons in every rank of society have always been among its benefactors. The Hospice of St. Mery, in the same city, was established by Viennet, the curate of that parish; that of St. André des Arcs, by Desbois de Rochefort, curate of St. Andrew's parish; the Cochin Hospital, in the suburb of St. James, is so called after its founder, who was curate of St. Jacques du-Haut-Pas, who devoted all his means

* Epist. lib. xi. 123.
† Epist. lib. xiii. 51.
‡ Lebeuf, Hist. tom. ii. chap. iii.
§ Notice Historique sur l'Hotel Dieu de Paris.

to the work, and was assisted by his pious relations *. The Hotel Dieu, in the town of St. Denis, was founded by Clovis II. in the seventh century. The Hospital and Church of St. Julian, in Paris, surnamed "Des Ménétriers," was founded, in 1330, by two minstrels, Jacques Grave and Hugue de Lorrain, who were excited by witnessing the misery of a poor woman in the streets. On the portal was carved the figure of a jongleur holding his rebec †. It was Robert Montri, a seller of wine, noted for his piety, that founded the Hospital and Convent of the Magdalen, in 1618, on being moved by the situation of two penitent women, who made known to him their distress, prompted by his celebrated character for devotion and mercy ‡. The Hospital of St. Gervais, at Paris, had been constructed at the expense and by the care of a mason, named Gavin, and of his son, who was a priest: this was in 1171 §. The hospital of the Charity of our Lady, in Paris, was founded by a young woman of the lower ranks of life, who had neither means nor birth that seemed adequate to such an undertaking: Frances de la Croix, or Simonne Gauguin, was the foundress, in 1624. In this institution young women consecrated their lives to serve and console the sick poor ||. In 1576 the Hospital de l'Oursine, for poor orphans, was founded by Nicolas Houel, an apothecary and druggist. He desired that they should prepare medicine for other poor, and supply them gratis ¶. In the year 1171 Jocius de Londonna, on his return from Jerusalem, going into the Hotel Dieu at Paris, saw there a chamber, in which, de toute ancienneté, were lodged some poor scholars: he left money to supply these poor scholars, with beds, and to give them besides twelve écus per month, engaging them each in turn to carry the cross and holy water before the bodies of such as should die in the hospital, and that they should recite the penitential psalms, and the prayers for the dead, every night **. The Hospice of Jesus, in the suburb of St. Laurent, was founded by St. Vincent of Paul, to whom a rich man gave the means, on

* Tenon, Clavareau, Mém. sur les Hopit.
† St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, tom. ii. 680.
‡ Id. ii. 710. § Id. ii. 847. || Id. ii. 1244.
¶ Tom. iii. 514. ** Id. iii. ii. 707.

the express condition that his name should never be made known. This furnished a retreat for old men, for whose use there was a chapel adjoining *. In the same capital there was a separate house of charity to receive sick boys, and maidens of a tender age. In other Catholic cities the history of similar institutions presents the same features. At Catana, Bartholomew Altavilla, a great magistrate, gave his own house, in 1396, to form a hospital, which bore the title of the Ascension; and that of the incurables, in the same city, was founded in the house of Baron Militelli †. Padua reckons amongst her most illustrious women Sibylla, the wife of Baldo Boniface, who completed and richly endowed the great hospital of St. Francis, in that city, of which her husband had laid the foundation. In Venice there were many hospitals and houses of mercy, founded by Venetian families, so early as in the eighth century, the patronage of which was still in the hands of the same race down to late times ‡.

Some institutions of this kind furnish interesting evidence in regard to the history of diseases. The Counts Donat and William Von Toggenburg, in the fourteenth century, gave a house and land to the brethren of St. Anthony, to form a hospital at Utznach, for persons afflicted with St. Anthony's fire, or morbus sacer, an order founded by a French nobleman at Vienne, in Dauphiny. They also gave funds for their support, under the obligation that they should say two masses, and make a distribution of bread for their parents, Frederick and Kunigund, on their anniversary, and maintain a burning light by their grave §.

To the preaching of the clergy many celebrated institutions of mercy owe their immediate origin. Thus, in the annals of the Capuchins, we read of brother Archangelo, of Palermo, having persuaded by his eloquent sermons several noble women to construct a hospital for the comfort of the convalescent ||, and of Jerome, of Pistoia, another celebrated preacher, having by one sermon at Florence induced Marieta, a pious lady of the noble

* Clavareau, Mém. sur les Hôpit.

† J. B. de Grossis Catanens. Decachord. c. ii. M. 16. in Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ, x.

‡ Splend. Venet. in Thes. Antiq. Italiæ, v.

§ Ildefons von Arx Geschichte S. Gallens, ii. 208.

|| An. 1577.

house of Gondi, to found with her own purse a hospital of refuge for the support of poor maidens *. Sometimes hospitals were founded and served by penitents, in expiation of their former errors. Durandus de Osca, and William of St. Antoninus, on renouncing the heresy of the Waldenses, desired to evince their penitence and Catholicity by serving God in the poor, for which purpose they proposed to found two separate convents, one for men and the other for women, having a hospital in common, where the poor, and the stranger, and the sick might be received, with a church under the invocation of St. Mary, and to this there were to be attached funds for clothing the poor in winter; and Pope Innocent III. gave letters approving of their intention †.

At other times hospitals owed their origin to an association of pious laymen. Thus that of St. Margarite, at Bologna, which became so great an ornament to the city, was founded, in 1336, by the brethren of St. Mary, of Death, who were merely charitable citizens, friends of the poor ‡.

The number of hospitals in great cities during the middle ages was prodigious, for the system of centralization in relation to such institutions would have been deemed pernicious, and utility was preferred to vain parade. In Rome, in the eighth century, under Pope Zacharia, there were four hospitals; and Stephen II., his successor, founded a fifth for a hundred poor; but in subsequent times their number greatly increased, so that there were reckoned there twenty-five rich and vast hospitals for the sick, for the poor, and for strangers §. In Florence in the sixteenth century, there were three hundred and five houses of charity, of which some were on a magnificent scale ||. In Antwerp there were thirty-three houses of charity, endowed by the citizens ¶. Paris alone contained forty-eight hospitals **. In Besançon, which is a small city, there were five hospitals of charity. The incidental evidence of their number in the Gallia

* An. 1570. † Epist. Inn. III. lib. xv. 82.
‡ Sigonii, Ep. Bonon. lib. iii.
§ Bocium de Signis Eccles. l. x. c. 9.
|| Leandri Alberti Descript. Italiæ, 67.
¶ Scribanius in suâ Antwerp. tit. Liberalitas.
** Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

Christiana, is certainly calculated to excite surprise. In fact, before the revolution, France contained more than seven hundred hospitals *; and yet their multiplication did not prevent the establishment of hospitals on a great scale: that of the Holy Ghost at Rome received eighteen hundred patients; and those of Vienna and Naples admitted as many as three thousand †. The smallest towns and villages had then some house of mercy to receive the poor, which often supplied the means of transmitting to posterity the names of great men. The parish of Brie-Comte-Robert, in the diocese of Paris, is so called from Count Robert, grandson of King Lewis-le-Gros, who is known to have been the founder of the Hôtel Dieu, and of the church in that place, which contained so few inhabitants. Even to parish churches there were foundations attached for the relief of poor persons. Thus Audrand, Abbot of St. Fuscien, near Amiens, made a foundation in the church of St. Sulpice, at Paris, in 1570, leaving eight hundred livres to form a marriage portion every year for eight orphans, and twenty francs for four scholars, each of whom, during five years, was to have a hundred sols to purchase books and other articles, on condition of celebrating his anniversary in that church ‡. In the church of St. Cosma, at Paris, there was a place where many surgeons used to assemble, on the first Monday of every month, to give advice and medicine to all poor sick people, a custom established by their confraternity in the time of St. Louis, when the clergy of Nôtre Dame ceased to perform that office. In 1555, Nicholas Langlois, one of the provosts of surgeons, left a rent of fifty louis for the continuation of these offices. The canons of St. Peter, of Troyes, having founded the hospital of St. Nicholas in that city, in addition, in the year 1205, gave each a portion of their prebend, as an indemnity for their not being able to attend to the poor as they wished, from being obliged to be present in the church for the canonical office §. At Milan the Prince Antonio Tolomeo Trivulzi changed his palace into a hospital for the poor. In

* De la Motte, Essai Hist. 17.
† Clavareau, Mém. sur les Hôpit.
‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, l. ii. 2.
§ Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 328.

the same city, Francis Sforza IV. duke of Milan, and his wife Blanca Maria Visconti, gave up one of his palaces, with its gardens, to form the vast hospital, which is still the admiration of all who visit Milan. This was in 1456. Cosmo de Medicis caused to be constructed at Jerusalem a hospital for poor sick pilgrims.

The charitable works of individuals in the middle age were truly prodigious, and might be deemed incredible, if they were not commemorated by incontrovertible records. No pen, we are assured, could describe the mercy and devotion of Henry the Liberal, Count of Troyes, in the twelfth century. His alms enriched not only the diocese of Troyes, but those of Chalons and Langres, as well as the archiepiscopal province of Rheims. He founded thirteen hospitals, and thirteen churches of canons. Amongst these the Hôtel Dieu-le-Comte, which was built close to his palace, served by canons of St. Augustin, was on such a scale of grandeur, that William of Tyre styles him on that account, "Virum magnificum." Frodsard, in his History of the Church of Rheims, speaks of a distinguished man, named Attole, of whom the epitaph attests, that he founded twelve hospitals, through love for St. Remi, who was his contemporary. He is buried, with his son and his daughter, behind the altar in the church of St. Julian, in that city *. Jane, countess of Flanders, daughter of Baldwin, emperor of Constantinople, who died in 1244, and whose tomb might be seen in the abbey of Marquelte, in Flanders, founded hospitals in Ghent, Ipres, Valenciennes, Bruges, and Lille †. So great was the number of hospitals built in Poland, Russia, Lithuania, and other distant regions of the north, by James Crescenti, when Provincial of the Dominicans, that it is said no one could tell them ‡. The prodigious number of hospitals built in Prussia by Winrich Von Kniprode, grand master of the Teutonic Order in the fourteenth century, is mentioned with astonishment even by profane historians. In every town he erected a hospital for the sick, and for the poor and helpless. He was styled the father of widows and orphans; and we are

* Liv. i. c. 23. † Les Delices des Païs bas, 1.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 3.

told that his chief object of solicitude, during the last days of his life, was to reform the arrangement of the great hospital of the Holy Ghost at Marienburg *.

We observe, however, that it was not merely to persons invested with distinguished offices in the state, that society was indebted for these immense benefits. The tradesman, or the artist, or the obscure citizen of the middle ages, effected more than could now be accomplished by the exertions of a whole city where the work of division has taken place. The founder of one house of mercy is now considered to have immortalized his name; but what would have been his title in the middle ages? Guercino, who with his own hand painted one hundred and six altar-pieces, and who bestowed the great riches which he had acquired by his profession, in acts of charity, built and endowed not merely one, but many hospitals and chapels, without appearing eminent in regard to such works. The celebrated Nicholas Flamel, whose tomb was in the church of St. Jacques de la Boucherie, at Paris, who was suspected of practising the occult sciences, on account of his immense riches, for which his contemporaries could not otherwise account, gave no other proof of his success in the trade of a scrivener, than by contributing to promote religious and charitable institutions. The Abbé Villain, in his history of that parish, has demonstrated, however, that it is easy to explain how he acquired such riches without recurring to charges of that nature, for, that his trade, before the invention of printing, was sufficiently lucrative to furnish him with the means of accomplishing all his works, particularly when we take into account the industry of the man, and also the piety and austerity of his life. He and his wife founded and endowed fourteen hospitals †, to many of which were attached beautiful chapels. The whole life of this curious citizen, after the death of his wife, was past in seclusion with his servant Marguerite La-Quesnel and her daughter Collette, who used to contribute their mite to the prodigious alms of their master. Besides the great monuments of his charity, it is recorded, that he purchased, near the street of St. Martin,

* Voight, Geschichte Preussens, b. v. 392.

† Histoire Critique de Nicolas Flamel, et de Pernille, sa Femme.

some old buildings, on the site of which he constructed several alms houses, to lodge poor people gratuitously, and here he placed an inscription to remind those who entered it, that he required in return from all whom he lodged, that they should say every day a Pater-noster and an Ave-Maria; and on the walls were sculptured many images kneeling; so that his guests had always the law before them written and represented.

To a traveller of the middle ages, the monuments of charity in each city and village, independent even of their religious interest, must have been often amongst the most curious objects for observation. Poets celebrate them, as may be witnessed in the works of Facius Ubertus, who mentions the vast hospital of Sienna, served by the brothers of a poor house *. The beautiful and superb hospital of Beaune resembled a palace rather than a retreat for the poor. It was founded by Rolin, a knight of Duke Philip the Good, of Burgundy †. At Caen, the hospital for the lepers had a park attached to it, enclosed within walls. A Duke of Normandy is said to have given this park in alms, which contains as much square land as a powerful archer could comprise within the range of his arrows ‡.

The hospitalers of St. Mandé at Paris occupied a space of about sixty acres, in a healthy and isolated spot. The Hôtel Dieu, which covers four acres with its original structure, extends in reality, by comprising its seven dependent buildings, over a space of forty acres. The Hôtel Dieu at Lyons, to which we alluded in the beginning, is described by a late eminent surgeon in his travels, as one of the most magnificent hospitals in Europe. It was founded, as we have seen, in the middle of the sixth century, by Childebert, son of Clovis, and his wife, queen of the Ostragoths. The body of the building, which is of vast extent, is in the form of a Greek cross. The grand infirmary measures nearly five hundred feet in length. In the centre of the cross stands a high altar, which can be seen from the extremity of the most distant wards. There are two large and lofty halls, styled

* Cant. viii.

† Duchesne, Antiquités des Villes de France, tom. ii. 316.

‡ De Bourgueville, les Recherches et Antiquités de Normandie, liv. ii. 22.

chambers of the convalescent, the patients of which are received at meals in the refectory. An order of nuns, one hundred and fifty in number, performs the duty of nurses, watches over and tends the sick, administers the medicines, and prepares the diet. The hospital can receive three thousand patients; the number now exceeds one thousand *.

Howard is filled with admiration at beholding the Roman hospitals of San Spirito, of the Benfratelli, of the Florentines, and of Santa Maria della Consolazione. The first was constructed by Pope Innocent III. on the site of a church and hospice, built by the Anglo-Saxon king Ina in the eighth century. No city in the world can boast of a more magnificent institution; its yearly expenditure exceeds one hundred thousand crowns †. Howard says that the hospital of Sancta Maria-de-Vita at Bologna inspires satisfaction in every humane person who beholds it. On the noble hospital for the sick at Genoa he bestows unqualified praise. Indeed, he prefaces his remarks on Italy by observing that this country affords great instruction respecting hospitals as well as prisons; yet when he visited other Catholic countries he found the same active and enlightened charity in equal operation. He says that nothing can surpass the houses of mercy at Vienna for the poor, the aged, and the sick; he observes, that at Strasburg a sort of generous munificence reigns in regard to all the miserable; and when he has seen Spain, he can only say, in general, that it abounds in charitable institutions ‡.

What a delightful object is that great hospital of San Juan-Baptista, placed in such a beautiful situation, at a short distance from the city of Toledo! This house was built by an archbishop in a style of royal magnificence, having vast corridores, noble staircases, and halls, accommodated for the seasons of winter and summer. The hospital of mercy at Lisbon is so richly supported by the charity of pious men, that the number of persons annually relieved seems almost incredible. It is depending wholly on fortuitous alms, and served by the brothers of mercy. Here portions are given to young maidens, to

* Bell's Observations on Italy.
† Hurter, Geschichte Innocenz III., book 2.
‡ Howard on the state of Hospitals, &c.

enable them to marry; persons of decayed fortune are assisted according to their wants, and whatever money is collected must always be expended within the year. More than twenty-four thousand gold ducats are annually given to the poor, and in some years the alms have exceeded forty thousand ducats. Here too the sick and infirm are received, as also foundlings. The whole is under the invocation of All Saints: it is built in a magnificent style, divided into four cloisters, with sweet gardens and thirty-four porches. The sick, on their recovery, are each presented with money sufficient to support them during many days after leaving the hospital. The benignity of all who serve in it is such as cannot be exceeded *. Speaking of the king's hospital at Burgos, a French writer remarks, that the Spaniards could give lessons to the most civilized nations on these monuments of charity. A cruel foresight, he says, does not render them afraid, lest the unhappy should find themselves so well treated as to view, without repugnance, these asylums opened to their misery †. The same traveller observes, that the establishments of charity at Madrid are sufficient to entitle it to a first rank among the capitals of Europe. The hospitals and confraternities are all on the most generous scale. He does not inform his reader of the origin of the great hospital at Burgos, the history of which, however, can throw some light upon the mystery of the difference which he remarks between the mercy of former ages and the beneficence of the present day; for this hospital, as also the convent of Holgis, had wholly a religious origin, being founded by Alfonso VIII. after his defeat at Alarcos, who desired in this manner to acknowledge his sins, and testify his repentance; to which pious works the great and renowned victory of the Navas de Tolosa, which was gained shortly after, has been ascribed by the Spanish writers. In the great hospital of Toledo are six vast noble pictures, of the school of Rubens. The Hospital of Charity, at Seville, contains ten of the finest paintings of Murillo, which are the admiration of all connoisseurs. The hospital of Cadiz is another magnificent establishment, enriched with works of art. "I have

* Damiani a Goez Olisoponis Descriptio.

† Bourgoign, Tableau de l'Espagne, i. 40.

been astonished," says Bourgoign, "and edified at the cleanness and order which distinguish all these institutions in Spain; and I have often admired how this devotion, this Christian charity, which in our age we imagine we treat with indulgence, when we only cover it with ridicule; how, I say, this principle can render men different from themselves, and take from them their most inveterate defects. In the pious foundations of the Spaniards there is no trace of apathy, or indolence, or filth *."

We can learn the state of the Italian hospitals in the sixteenth century from the mouth of a great adversary. "In Italy," says Luther, "the hospitals are well provided, well built; the best food is given; there are attentive servants, and skilful physicians; the beds and the clothes are very clean; the interior of the building is adorned with fine pictures. When a sick person is brought in, his own clothes are taken from him, in presence of a notary, who writes down an exact description, that they may be restored to him. He is clad in a white dress, and placed in a well-made bed, in white sheets. Two physicians visit him, and the servants wait upon him with the food prescribed. Then come to him also ladies and honourable matrons, who take the veil during some days to serve the poor; so that no one knows who they are, and then they return home. At Florence also I have seen the hospitals well served with all care. In like manner the houses for foundlings, where the little children have the best nourishment, instruction, and education†." The care even to adorn with magnificence the asylums of the poor and wretched was conspicuous from the first. If it were not for the name of the Albergo Dei Poveri, one might suppose that this vast institution at Genoa, which was founded by a member of the Brignoli family, to serve as an asylum for upwards of a thousand persons, from old age or other causes reduced to want, had been intended to serve as a palace for princes. It is impossible to behold this vast edifice, magnificent as a royal residence, without being forcibly struck with the splendour of Catholic charity. The church attached to it is vast and beautiful, and contains an exquisite work by Michael

* Tableau de l'Espagne, tom. iii. 17.
† Michelet, Mém. de Luth. ii.

Angelo. In the entrance hall are colossal statues, in marble, of the charitable nobles and ladies who have endowed the Albergo at different times: the figure of the founder receiving a poor boy, whose ragged clothes are represented in the marble, though certainly not a masterpiece of art, is enough to draw tears, such an expression of mercy and Christian tenderness characterizes the whole group. The figure of a noble dame of the Pallavicini family pouring forth her money into the treasury of the hospital, is another striking piece of art in this hall. There is also at Genoa an institution supported and conducted by the Fiesco family, in which eight hundred female children are lodged, and taught to work at some trade, and each receives a thousand francs when she marries. It was Bartholomew Bosco who, in the year 1423, founded the great hospital De Pammatone, in the same city. Here are seventy-five statues of benefactors. Hector Vernassa founded another on a scale of almost equal magnificence. Superb and numerous as are the private palaces of the Genoese, the asylums of the indigent strike the imagination of a stranger, whose eyes, though bent on view of novel sights, cannot refuse to turn to their allurement. The people have not to penetrate into the houses of the Dorias, the Brigniolis, and Durazzas, to behold the noblest works of art; they will find the sublimest paintings and imagery in sculpture, the master-pieces of Michael Angelo himself, where think you? in the hostel of the poor. Among the gifts of Pope Innocent III. to the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome we read of precious treasures, ornaments, and books *. Again, at Florence, the façade of the vast hospital of Santa Maria Novella, which was founded in 1287 by Folco Portinari, father of the Beatrice immortalized by Dante, was designed by no less distinguished an artist than Buontalenti, and is the admiration of all beholders. In the same city the hospital founded by Bonifacio Lupi contains paintings by the first artists. In the great hospital at Sienna you find ancient paintings of various saints, patriarchs, and prophets, so full of merit that Pinturicchio and Raffaello did not disdain to study them.

At Venice you have the same union of mercy and magnificence. One might suppose in this city that it

* Gesta, Inn. III. 144.

was pity and love of the poor which had inspired and nourished the arts. If you wish to see paintings by Piloti, Palma, and Bellino, you must repair to the hospice of St. Job and of St. John the Baptist. Are you attracted by Peranda, Mazzenio, and Carlo Lotti? You must visit the hospital for poor foundlings. If you follow Caelesti, Stroifi, Reinerio, Mazza, Ruschi, and Perugino, you must pass to the hospital of Saints John and Paul, where are received the sick, and the orphan, and the stranger. To see the picture of Liberi, representing the seven works of mercy, and innumerable master-pieces, or, on festivals, to hear the celebrated music, which attracts all Venice, you must condescend to enter the house of St Lazarus, for beggars, where five hundred of these poor persons are nourished, whose daughters are the musicians that will perform it. If you ask for the painting of St. Ursula, by Tintoreti, or that of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, by Varori, or many others of the first artists, you are referred to the hospital of Incurables, or to the hospice for poor maidens, or to the house of convertites for penitent women *.

Nor is this munificence in pity confined to Italy. The hospital of St. John the Evangelist at Bruges, which faces the portal of the church of our Lady in the street of St. Catharine, is an edifice of no less beauty than antiquity. In the chapel is the shrine of St. Ursula, adorned with miniature pictures, representing the history of the Saint, and scenes from the Apocalypse, exquisitely painted by Hemmelink, the disciple of Van-Eyck, whose colours remain as pure and brilliant as if they had been laid on but yesterday. In the council-chamber of the hospital is a large picture of St John, painted by the same artist.

The magnificence of the hospital at Quenoy, in Flanders, used to be a theme of admiration with all travellers in that country. This house was founded by a chaplain of Baldwin the Brave, tenth Count of Flanders; and it was rebuilt on the present scale in 1233 by Jane, Countess of Hainaut, and richly endowed by her sister and heiress, the Countess Marguerite, who placed in it nuns of the order of St Augustin †.

* Splend. Venet. in Thes. Antiq. Italiæ, tom. v.

† Les Delices des Païs bas, tom. i.

Notwithstanding the splendour and beauty of these great institutions, it is important to remark that in no instance could one discover, in their plan or administration, a sacrifice of utility to vanity or caprice. They were always so constituted as to present the most prompt and efficacious relief that the case required; whereas, in the foundations of later times, the true order of charity is far from being preserved with the same uniformity. St. Victor remarks, that the hospital of the Invalides at Paris, constructed by Louis XIV., was more pompous than useful. At half the expense the soldiers could have been rendered much more happy, each in his native village *.

But what was still more worthy of attention than any thing yet noticed in the hospitals and other institutions of mercy, in the middle ages, was the singular ingenuity evinced by their founders and benefactors in their plans and modes of administration, and in the art with which they proposed to meet all possible circumstances of human misery, and to further the great end of yielding both corporal and spiritual assistance.

To consider, in the first instance, a case which presented the greatest difficulty, let us pause a moment to view the hospitals for lepers, of which we have already had occasion to speak. These were generally built at the entrance of cities and towns, totally separated from places inhabited, and each city and even village was bound to take charge of its own lepers. At Paris there were three hospitals for these unhappy persons. Matthew Paris says, that there were in his time nineteen thousand houses of that kind in Christendom, which is not incredible, since we read of Louis VIII., in 1225, bequeathing a hundred sous to each of the two thousand lazarettos in his kingdom †.

In England there was large provision made for lepers. There was an hospital for women afflicted with that disease in the diocese of Lincoln, a noble one near Durham, three in London, and perhaps many more near our great cities.

In the year 789 Charlemagne had expressly prohibited lepers from holding any communication with the people,

* Tableau de Paris, tom. iv. 80.

† De la Motte, Essai Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu.

and during 907 years this police subsisted in France. In 1693, when the disease disappeared, Louis XIV. ordered that the leproseries should be in future united with the other hospitals.

Hospitals for foundlings cannot be traced to such an early period, and the explanation of this fact might lead to many very important reflections. Infanticide and exposition of children, which had been sanctioned in all the ancient states, were in a gradual but no less miraculous manner abolished by the Catholic religion in ages of faith. In early times the Christian women offered themselves as nurses to preserve the abandoned infants of the Pagans, while the fathers of the Church denounced the inhumanity of such parents with an admirable eloquence *. By degrees, the principle which they inculcated produced its effect upon the civil government; though the number of expositions only diminished in proportion to the propagation of the faith. Constantine, by his remarkable and greatly misrepresented law, permitting parents to sell their new-born children, which was a revocation of the edicts of Diocletian and Maximian, provided against the greater evil of infanticide by sanctioning the lesser, which, in fact, only amounted to the consignment of children to a domestic servitude †. Succeeding emperors secured the lot of foundlings, by permitting those who had nourished them to use them as their servants. But Justinian declared that in future such children should enjoy the whole rights of free citizens, concluding with this admirable sentence, "Man ought not to fufil a duty of charity because he reckons upon a salary." By this time, however, the Christian Church had established a great empire in the minds of men, so that from day to day the number of expositions became sensibly less and less. Pious foundations were made, manners were reformed, chastity was honoured, and the emperors had abolished the penalties against celibacy, by which blind Paganism had hoped to favour population. Christianity had partly dried up the two great sources of evil in society—immorality and misery; so that from the sixth to the fifteenth century there is scarcely a question raised respecting foundlings. One

* Tertul. Apolog. c. ix.
† Lallier, du Pauperisme.

discovers only here and there the trace of some rare public establishment in their favour,—as when Pope Innocent III. is related to have been moved to build and endow a hospital for foundlings on hearing that a fisherman of the Tiber had found three drowned children in his net. Private charity was sufficient to provide for the wants of society. Scarcely in the whole body of canon law do we find a single passage concerning foundlings. In regard to their baptism there is an allusion to them in the decrees of the council of York, held in 1197, under Pope Celestin IIIrd, and by the council of Arles in 389; as also in two capitularies, the one of Childeric IIIrd, in 744, and the other of Charlemagne: the limits of time are fixed after which no one must reclaim a foundling. Besides these, Lallier, in his Essay on Pauperism, declares that he knows of no other instance. In the eleventh century, there is mention, however, of some persons too poor to nourish their children, who used to place them at the doors of the church, with the expectation of their being taken up by the clergy, and nourished in a hospital for the purpose, where they would be educated *. In the twelfth century, poor people in Prussia, in extreme necessity, used sometimes to place their infants at the doors of the hospitals of the Teutonic order, and these foundlings were then baptized and provided with nurses. In later times, by bulls of many Popes, the institution of hospitals for this express purpose was recommended †. At Naples foundlings used to be received and adopted voluntarily, even by poor people, and were then called children of our Lady, figli della Madonna. The place for their reception at Padua in the sixteenth century, was called "The House of God ‡." In the foundling hospital at Lisbon Howard found ninety children, but still most of them were of Moorish parents. Albert the Great, when Legate of the Holy See in Poland, abolished the inhuman custom which had prevailed in those barbarous regions, of killing all children that were born with any defect, or that their parents could not nourish. Howard mentions, that at

* Landulph. Mediolanens. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 35.

† Voight Geschichte Preussens, ii. 117. Muratori, Antiq. Ital. iii. 592.

‡ Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Pat. ii. 5.

the time when he writes, infanticide is common in Denmark, though he neglects to remark that the preventive had been removed with the Catholic faith. From the year 1180 infants exposed were received into the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Montpellier. The foundling hospitals at Paris date from 1638, and owe their origin to the indefatigable zeal of St Vincent de Paul. Before that year we find this work of mercy devolving upon devout widows, whose means in early times had proved adequate to the task. But the new instructors had now been heard of in most lands. When Tenon wrote his Memoirs, the foundling hospital at Paris contained three hundred and ninety-six children, and nourished besides in the country fifteen thousand. In the space of one hundred and seventeen years this hospital received two hundred and fifty-three thousand, three hundred children. It is a remarkable fact that this number has successively increased, and particularly from the year 1741, in which year alone the number received amounted to three thousand, three hundred and eighty, which was nearly the same as had been admitted during the ten preceding years. At the present day, the great problem of the social science is to determine the method of diminishing the increasing number of exposed children. The fall of society is so profound that no one could credit it, if it were not attested by official documents. Such has been the result of renouncing the faith and manners of Catholicism, which had reconstituted human society with such admirable success during so many ages, appearing to have justified the conviction of philosophers that the evils of the ancient world were extirpated for ever.

The need of other institutions, which the crimes and consequent miseries of men have added, in later times, to the heavy list of social wants, had then been experienced but in slight measure. A single tower would formerly suffice to inclose the madmen of a whole country; and so little did the discipline maintained within it resemble that which has so long disgraced the great asylums, as they are denominated, of modern states, that those who approached it at the evening hour might hear the bell which called the maniacs to vespers. Insanity was a rare phenomenon in the ages which we survey. Modern writers acknowledge the afflicting

truth, that what they term "the progress of civilization and the growing complication of human affairs," phrases which every Catholic, ascetically wise, will easily understand, have added largely to the numbers of the insane in any given population. This was, therefore, almost a new field thrown open to the blessed merciful; and at Caen, and in many other cities, we may behold the happy results of their solicitude in our times, their exhaustless patience, and benignant care to make it fruitful.

But, to return to the middle ages, and survey the general foundations which then existed. Besides the great institutions for common wants, there were numberless hospitals designed with subtle charity for some less prominent object. Thus there were hospitals richly endowed for the convalescent alone, who had left the houses of the sick. At Paris we meet with legacies of pious persons to support a hospital of this kind, in which women, on leaving the Hôtel Dieu, might be received during at least three days and nights *. Amyot, in his youth being confined with a sickness in the Hôtel Dieu at Orleans, received from it on going out a sum of money to enable him to continue his journey, in consideration of which he left by his testament twelve hundred crowns to that hospital. In the hospital of convalescents at Paris workmen and artisans were received during eight days, and had liberty to go out each day, in search of employment. In that capital there were no less than twenty hospitals for the poor who were in health, for old men, for widows, for orphans, for strangers, and for wandering youth. Similar establishments were in other cities.

Part of the convent of St. Joseph at Florence is inhabited by the children of refuge of St. Philip Neri, instituted in 1650 by Philip Franci, to receive and educate boys of bad manners, from the age of sixteen years, where they are taught some useful art by which they may maintain themselves. At Bologna there was erected, in 1355, a house of charity, to receive men converted from a spirit of blasphemy, the origin of which is thus related :—A certain man having lost money at play, uttered imprecations against the blessed Virgin, before whose image in Porta, which is in the centre of the city, he had

* Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

been playing. Immediately he was seized with spasms in all his limbs, and blindness, and in that state carried to the hospital; on hearing of which event fifteen young men, conscious of having often sinned in the same manner, resolved to amend their lives, and, renouncing all earthly things, obtained permission from the Bishop, John de Naso, to build this house for themselves and others who might join them, where they assumed a monastic habit *. In Florence the institution for women converted was entitled Malmaritate. It was the custom to oblige persons of dissolute lives to assist in the cathedral at a sermon, on the Thursday of the fifth week in Lent, in which the horror of their state was represented. In order to receive such as were converted, this charitable institution was founded under the invocation of St. Mary Magdalen.

Montiel acknowledges the admirable conversions which were made in the great institutions of the middle ages for the support of penitent women. Religion, he says, had purified their soul and their heart. I read with delight this article of the expense of the Provost —"Aux pauvres filles pénitentes, dix livres parisis, en pitié et aumosne, pour avoir du pain, dont elles ont grand nécessité et souffrette †." The description which Bernardine Scardeoneo, in the sixteenth century, gives of the similar institution at Padua, is affecting. This house, saith he, styled "Of the Illuminated and Converted Women," was instituted by a holy priest, Francis Zaghio. It adjoins the church of St. Sophia, and is conducted by devout nuns. Here there are at present forty of these poor penitents, acknowledging their error, who have fled here of their own accord, as if to an asylum; here they live by the labour of their hands, and by the alms of the pious; they are taught to read, and to sing diurnal and nocturnal offices, which they perform with such piety that I do not believe any monks of the strictest observance can surpass them: so that here we behold verified what is said in the Gospel, that the harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God, while Scribes and Phari-

* Sigonii, De Ep. Bonon. lib. iii.

† Antiq. de Paris, par Sauval. Comptes de la Prévote, année 1503 et 1510.

sees are cast out*. At Bologna, also, it was in consequence of hearing that a number of such victims would, of their own accord, take refuge in a house of penitence, if such an asylum were provided for them, that the Bishop, John Campegius, persuaded the citizens to erect one in 1551†.

It was Henry III., the King of simple life and plain, as Dante styles him, who founded the hospital or religious house of converts, in Chancery-lane, in London, which is now known by the name of the Rolles, "ad sustentationem Fratrum conversorum, et convertendorum de Judaismo ad fidem Catholicam." There was a similar house at Rome, founded by Pius V., and also a college, founded by Gregory XIII. for the express purpose of receiving such Jews as desired to be instructed in the Christian religion. At Venice, also, the piety of the state had provided a church and hospice, to receive Jews on their conversion, as also converts from the Turks‡. The Jews, on their conversion, were not only to be watered with the dew of doctrine, as Pope Innocent III. said, but also to be nourished with temporal benefits§. Lest the shame of poverty, which they are not accustomed to bear with equanimity, should compel them to look back, all the faithful, he says, must bear assistance to them; and there is a grand letter of the same Pontiff to the Bishop of Autun, who had neglected to relieve the wants of a certain converted Jew and his daughter, and for having neglected or despised attending to the apostolic mandate to that effect||. By the persuasion of a nobleman, a certain Jew in Leicester had been induced to renounce all the riches which he possessed, and receive baptism, to follow Christ. As long as this nobleman lived the convert was well supported, but, after his death, he was left without means of subsistence; whereupon the same Pontiff wrote to the abbot and convent of St. Mary of the Fields, at Leicester, commanding them, for the sake of Him by whom he

* Bern. Scard. de Antiq. Patavii, lib. ii. cap. 5.
† Sigonii De Epis. Bonon. lib. v.
‡ Spend. Venet. in Thes. Antiq. Ital. v.
§ Inn. III. Epist. lib. xvi. 84.
|| Id. lib. ii. Epist. 206.

received the light of truth, to supply him in future with all things necessary *. In later times there was occasion to provide for convertites of another description, and accordingly there was an establishment in Gex, founded by St. Francis de Sales, and another in Paris, founded by a virtuous ecclesiastic, to receive persons from the ranks of false reform, who were newly converted to the Catholic faith, and whose Protestant relations and friends had abandoned them on their conversion †. To lead weak mortals from temptation, and to deliver them from moral danger, while assisting their corporal necessities, there were institutions expressly established. For this purpose, at Rheims, there was the hospital of St. Catherine, to give lodging and bread during one night to all women who should present themselves at the gate ‡. At Paris, in the hospital of St. Catherine, in the street of St. Denis, at the corner of that of Lombards, the nuns of St. Augustine used to give hospitality with the same intention during three nights, to poor women who were in search of service, and to such as came from the country about business. This house could receive as many as sixty-nine guests §.

But it would be in vain to think of enumerating all the cunningly devised and generously supported institutions, to which blessed mercy gave birth. If we desired to visit all that existed in one city alone, we should be at a loss to determine whither we should direct our steps. Witness, for example, the city of Milan, in which were constantly open such a multitude of doors to receive not merely the poor, and sick, and miserable, but even all who might have been in danger of becoming such, to whom every kind of assistance was supplied by noble laics, under the guidance of priests ‖. Who could describe the houses of choice mercy in any great Catholic city in the middle ages? And yet, after all, men were not satisfied with these. Every private door was open to the stranger poor. At Ghent, before the revolution, there was a house in which half an ox was boiled every

* Inn. III. lib. ii. Epist. 234.
† St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, tom. ii. 525.
‡ Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. iv. 266.
§ St. Victor, Tableau de Paris, i. 572.
‖ Italia Sacra, tom. iv. 26.

day, and given to all who came. This was called the Pot of St. Peter, and the idea of the founder was evident enough. No doubt, said he, within his own mind, there are hospitals and monasteries innumerable, where my poor fellow Christians can be relieved; yet, still, as it is possible that there may be some wandering wretch, whom peculiar circumstances may prevent from applying to them, let there be a feast daily to which all may come, and a dish to which every hungry man may stretch a hand. At Madrid there was a charitable brotherhood called La Hermandad del Refugio, the members of which used to repair every morning to a chamber in the hospital of San Antonio, whence they set out to perambulate the streets of the city, announcing their passage by striking the pavement with a stick loaded with iron. All the poor and wretched persons that they met were conducted by them to this hospital, where they were given soup and eggs, a bed for the night, and a breakfast next morning of bread and dried grapes *. There were at Paris and Rouen twenty-four chambers, entitled "Of Francs Bourgeois," where the poor were lodged gratis, and presented with thirteen farthings on entering, and one farthing each week, with permission to beg through the city †. There were also the chambers of the twenty-five poor of St. Eustache, and those of the poor beadsmen, and that of the poor man of St. Martin ‡. This last foundation was in the Abbatial chapter of St. Martin at Tours. He was fed, and clothed and lodged, and had a place in all solemn processions. At Paris, by the church of Nôtre-Dame, there was always a long bench, on which charitable people used to deposit the garments that they wished to give to the poor §.

There were donations, as we have seen, with the sole view of contributing to the pleasures and solace of the convalescent poor, and the generous spirit in which these were conceived is very remarkable. In the grant of Adam

* Howard, State of Hospitals.

† Monteil, Hist. des François. Amiot, Hist. de Rouen, tom. i. chap. des Cordeliers. Antiq. de Paris, par Sauval, liv. ii.

‡ Lettres des Rois Mars, 1472, relative to the foundation du pauvre de Saint-Martin de Tours.

§ Lebeuf, Hist. de la Ville et du Diocèse de Paris, tom. i. chap. 1.

who gave two houses to the hospital of the cathedral of Nôtre Dame at Paris, in 1199, there is a condition enjoined, that on his anniversary, such persons as are sick in the house shall be provided with whatever kind of food they may please to ask for, provided it can be procured anywhere. "Ea conditione, quod ægrotantibus quicquid cibariorum in eorum venerit desiderio, si tamen posset inveniri, de totali proventu domorum in die anniversarii ejus detur*."

In the twelfth century the statutes of the merchant silversmiths ordained, that they should give a dinner on Easter-day to the patients of the same hospital; and it is related, that at this banquet the service was always performed by their wives, who were to repair to the hospital pompously dressed†. In this hospital there are certain lesser wards contiguous to the greater, which are reserved for the accommodation of such persons as fall sick in the service of the poor, and also of individuals in a distressed state, to whom a peculiar respect is due, and who can thus feel themselves isolated and unobserved, a delicate contrivance of Catholic charity that should not be passed by unnoticed‡. There is a class of persons unwilling to have recourse to a public hospital, and yet without sufficient means to procure assistance in their own homes, and for these there is a house of health in the suburb of St. Lawrence in the same capital§. At Florence the hospital of St. Paul was destined exclusively to receive and entertain, during four days, the convalescent who came there from other hospitals before resuming their occupations. Hugh de Trottescline, abbot of St. Austin at Canterbury, in the reign of Henry I. founded a hospital near his own abbey, to the honour of Christ and St. Laurence, for the reception of sick monks; and also, he adds, if it should so happen that the father, mother, sister, or brother of any monk of this monastery should come to such great want as that, to the reproach of any of these brethren, he or she be forced to ask at the gates the alms of the fraternity, that then such of them so asking should be provided for in this asylum. The superb hospital of Ciudad Real was built by an archbishop of Toledo, to re-

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. c. i.
† Notice, Hist. sur l'Hôtel-Dieu.
‡ Id. 23.
§ Clavareau, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

ceive such of his poor diocesans as might be scattered through La Mancha. At Paris, the hospital for the support of three hundred blind men, dates from the year 1260.

All these triumphs of intelligence in the service of charity, which excite so much admiration at present, can be traced to the spirit, and often to the instrumentality, of the holy inhabitants of cloisters, who still continue, as they have ever been, at the head of every work that can alleviate human sorrows, as may be witnessed in that learned and humble monk Octavius Assarotti, who founded the institution of the deaf and dumb at Genoa. The union of hospitality and mercy which reigned in those hospices of the middle age, which we before visited in company with the pilgrims, formed a delightful feature in the ancient manners, on which I cannot refrain from dwelling a little. These also had their commencement in the bishop's house, as we may infer from these lines of Fortunatus, describing St. Magnericus, Archbishop of Treves:—

> Te panem esuriens, tectum hospes, nudus amictum,
> Te fessus requiem, spem peregrinus habet.

The bishop's house was adjoining the church, but we may learn what was its simplicity in early times from the word "tuguriolum," used by the African fathers in describing it *. With what mercy the stranger was received in these humble dwellings, may be conceived from the character which the same poet ascribes to Leontius II. Archbishop of Bourdeaux, of whom he says:—

> Susceptor peregrum distribuendo cibum.
> Longius extremo si quis properasset ab orbe,
> Advena mox vidit, hunc ait esse patrem.

Accordingly in the commencement there was no distinction of separate houses for the pilgrim and the sick, but, as at Paris, the one house of God was established for both. The motto of the Hôtel Dieu was "Medicus et hospes." At any hour of the day and night pilgrims and other persons who asked hospitality were received there, and all these individuals might remain till they chose to leave it to pursue their journey; nor was there any rule to oblige

* Gallia Christiana.

the patients to depart on their recovery *. Pope Innocent III. subjected his great hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome to the same obligation †. The hostels exclusively for hospitality, which were so multiplied in the middle ages, exhibited generally some image or painting of St. Julian, for this celebrated convertite had renounced the world with his wife, and built a hut in a forest, where they gave lodging and food to all strangers, only asking them in return to pray for the souls of his father and mother, whom he had slain in an access of fury, supposing that he had surprised an adulterer on finding them one night as he returned from hunting, in his own bed, where they had been placed by his wife during his absence, their arrival being unknown to him. The kind, old, unpretending hospice is certainly a most interesting monument of those ages of mercy.

"Here comes a pilgrim," says a citizen, whom Shakspeare represents standing at his door; "I know he will lie at my house; thither they send one another. God save you, pilgrim; whither are you bound? To St. Jacques-le-Grand. Where do the palmers lodge, I do beseech you?" You perceive there was generally a place especially provided for them. Thus at Evreux was the hospital of St. James for pilgrims to Compostello. There were similar hospices at Bourdeaux, and in most cities of Europe. That at Blois was founded by the charitable Louis de Chastillon, count of Blois, and by some private persons who had compassion on the pilgrims of St. James. In Paris the hospice of St. James, which we before visited, was particularly celebrated; but other poor men, strangers and passengers in that capital, had their rendezvous at the hospice of St. Gervais in the old street of the Temple, served by nuns of St. Augustin, who gave them lodging and supper during three nights; and one hundred strangers, on an average, were lodged here ‡. In Brussels similarly there were many small hospices for pilgrims and travellers, which gave them lodging and entertainment during three days §. At Catana the senate

* Notice Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 10.

† Inn. III. Epist. liv. x. 179.

‡ Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux; et Duchesne, Antiquités des Villes de France, tom i. 82.

§ Les Delices des Païs bas.

deemed it a matter of public importance that ample provision should be made for giving hospitality to every poor stranger in the Xenodochium in the house of St. Euplus *. Bernardine Scardeoneo says, that before the sixteenth century, when the number of penitents was greater, there were in Padua, as in other cities, two hospices at each of the gates, one within, the other without the walls, so that the number at Padua amounted to twenty-four, of which none remained when he wrote but those of St. Leoline, of the Holy Cross, of St. James, and of St. Anthony, all which were religiously conducted by a confraternity of devout laics: the swine belonging to the hospice of St. Antony were marked, and allowed to run about the city †.

Vincent de Beauvais, in treating upon architecture, as adapted to the different kinds of houses, alludes to the Xenodochium, to receive strangers and poor people from the roads ‡: these were thickly scattered far and wide over Europe. Malta first of all the regions of the earth had the honour to give a hospitable reception to the poor of Christ in the person of St. Paul and his companions when shipwrecked, and its prince, Publius, was their first benefactor; here consequently, in early times, arose a great convent and house of hospitality for pilgrims §. But on the wildest and most inhospitable borders were similar institutions found. Thus in Orderic Vitalis we read, that there was on the frontier of the territories of Bavaria and the Huns an honourable hospital, which faithful and powerful Christians of the neighbouring provinces had founded, to receive the poor and pilgrims. A Norman, named Angot, was their chief: he had borne arms under Richard and Robert, dukes of Normandy; but, moved by the fear of God, he abandoned the world, and preferred, for the love of Christ, pilgrimage and voluntary poverty all his life. Here all travellers were entertained for some days ||. Celebrated in England were the foundations of William of Wyckam, of which the hospice of the Holy Cross at Winchester remains a solitary vestige. The Maison Dieu, at Dover, was also a

* De Grossis Catanens. Decachord. ii. 16. Thes. Antiq. Siciliæ, x.

† Bern. Scard. de Antiquit. Patavii, lib. ii. cap. 5.

‡ Speculum Doctrinale, lib. x. 20.

§ Sicilia Sacra, tom. ii. 903. || Hist. Norman. lib. iii.

magnificent institution, in which pilgrims and all poor strangers arriving from the continent were lodged and entertained gratuitously. To this house was attached a fine park, the grey mouldering walls of which can still be traced, and a noble church. The interior of this venerable pile has lately undergone a total change, in order to receive henceforth prisoners condemned to solitary confinement, for whom have been constructed lightsome cells, such as are seen in the garden of the king at Paris, where wild and savage animals are kept for show; a different hospitality in sooth from what was once established here. At Lille, too, there were hospitals in which all the poor who passed by were fed, warmed, and lodged during three days; and when there were not sufficient beds, there were great coverings called bayards, which served to warm several together. Montiel cites the act of the foundation of the hospital of St. Julien, in 1321, which ordains that in the said house there shall be perpetually sixteen beds well stuffed, and two great beds called bayards. Poor modest citizens had prebends of this hospital, which entitled them to receive corn and money every week.

The celebrated hospital of the Holy Ghost at Dijon is the subject of a curious and elaborate history, illustrated by miniatures, and divided into centuries. In the fifteenth century it is said, that there are seventy beds for the sick in the entrance hall, that the other apartments were full of beds and cradles for poor travellers and old people and children, that endless alms used to be distributed by hand at the gates, and that in 1434, in consequence of the public calamities, there were fifteen thousand people received there. It was served by nuns habited in black, and bearing a white cross on the breast. Celebrated among these was sister Angèle, who died in 1459, in the odour of sanctity. Montiel describes the vast number of hospices for the poor and for strangers, which existed in France down to the eighteenth century. In each of these houses the poor were received at least for a day, so that they travelled free of expense. This historian refers to the ancient coutumes of Tours, and to various chronicles of towns *.

* Antiq. d'Anjou, par Jean Hiret; l'Hist. d'Amiens, par le Père d'Aire; l'Hist. de Rouen, par Amiot.

These houses acquired often a great interest from the eminent sanctity of the guests whom they had received. Thus the hospice at Genoa became so venerable for having sheltered St. Laurence on his way from Spain, that soon after his martyrdom it was converted into a church; and at Florence the hospice near the church of St. Lucia, on the banks of the Arno, was distinguished for having been the house in which, at different times, St. Francis of Assisi, and St. Dominick, on their coming to that city, had been received to hospitality. The images of these blessed saints were placed over the door of this house, as a memorial of the fact; and as this old sculpture represented them in the habit which they really wore, it was considered peculiarly precious *.

Cardinal Peter, in 1213, seeing the immense multitude of people that resorted to the cathedral of St. Andrew at Amalphi, erected and endowed a hospice near it, to receive the pilgrims †. With a similar intention Lanfranc built houses in Canterbury, for the reception and entertainment of the stranger poor.

The great hospice for pilgrims of St. Michael, of Mount Gargano, at Siponti, is a monument of the charity of Cardinal Orsini, during his government of that church. This great man, when translated to Beneventum, twice rebuilt, after its destruction by earthquakes, and furnished with every necessary, a similar house in that city, in which all poor strangers were lodged and nourished, during three days. This holy Cardinal and Archbishop, who afterwards ruled the universal Church, as Benedict XIII, used, on certain days every week, to visit this hospice, and serve these poor guests at table ‡.

About the year 1120, Alard, viscount of Flanders, built in Auvergne a hospice and monastery, on a high mountain, which is covered with snow and clouds during eight months of the year. Here the monks were to receive all travellers. Similar houses existed on the passes of the Alps, by the great and little St. Bernard and St. Gothard.

The Emperor Frederick, in the year 1160, speaks as

* Wadding, Annales Minorum, an. 1211.

† Italia Sacra, tom. vii. 216.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. vi. liv. 43.

follows: "Since we are bound to render an account before the tribunal of Christ, if by the improvidence of our Government any men should perish, and there is no greater benefit in this world than to erect fountains and hospitals in desert places, and especially on Alps, where the servants of God are in habits of passing; therefore let all the faithful of Christ know that, for the love of Jesus Christ and for the safety of our souls, we have taken the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary de Crispino, under our especial protection, to be independent of all states and nobles *." Similar hospices were on the passes of the Pyrenees. The Cardinal of Bourbon, returning from conducting the unfortunate Elizabeth into Spain, stopped at the hospice of Ronceveaux. He sat down at table with three hundred travellers, to each of whom he gave three reals, to assist them in continuing their journey.

The poet Spenser flourished so shortly after the change of religion in England, that he must have been able to paint from memory when he represents the hospice by the way:—

"Eftsoones unto an holy hospitall
That was foreby the way, she did him bring,
In which seven bead-men, that had vowed all
Their life to service of high heaven's King,
Did spend their daies in doing godly thing:
Their gates to all were open ever more,
That by the wearie way were traveiling,
And one sate wayting ever them before,
To call in commers-by, that needy were and pore †."

There were in many cities hospices for the gratuitous entertainment of persons of particular nations. Thus the Anglo-Saxons had their hospice in Rome, the inhabitants of Lyons theirs in Avignon, and the Austrians theirs at Madrid; for the hospital of San Antonio, in that city, was originally destined to lodge and nourish, during three days, poor travellers of that country.

It was not, however, merely in the foundation of hospices on the roads, that the action of mercy, in regard to travellers in the middle age, was seen. The erection and maintenance of bridges and causeways, to avoid

* Italia Sacra, tom. i. 498. † I. 10.

desperate passes, full of danger, must be ascribed to the same principle, as the details respecting them in our ancient histories will demonstrate.

Accordingly, Reginbert, bishop of Passau, in 1144, for the remedy of his soul, desiring to benefit the community in the most efficacious manner possible, builds a bridge over the river Oen, whose impetuous flood had often endangered men and goods; and as the toll of the ferry belonged to the canons regular of St. Nicholas there, fearing to incur sin by injuring them, he gives in compensation for the toll, a church of Hartkirch, that the bridge may be free to every one. Near that bridge he builds also, for the love of heaven, an asylum for the poor, a hostel for pilgrims, including a church in honour of the victorious cross of Christ, and he appoints Udalricus, a priest, to superintend the bridge and hostel, and to all who give alms in furtherance of the work he grants an indulgence *. In the monastery of Burton, there was a prior named John of Streton, a man of great authority and of eminent learning. He obtained leave from the abbot to employ all the property of his father and mother on their death, for the benefit of their souls, in building the bridge of Egenton over the waters of the Done, which he did, and mercifully sustained the said bridge for a long time. After his death, the inhabitants of Egenton, in 1255, pretending not to know that this had all been done through charity, asserted that the Abbot of Burton ought to repair the bridge for ever; thus converting grace and alms into obligation. Therefore, Abbot Laurence, who was then head of the monastery, sent letters to the king's courts, and an inquisition was instituted before chosen men of Staffordshire, who gave their verdict that the bridge had always been maintained through charity, by alms, and not by obligation of law †.

Portuguese writers attest that the bridge over the Minho, between Rivadaria and Orense, of which the passage had been always very dangerous, was built either by St. Peter Gonçalez or by the blessed Gonçales d'Amaranthe ‡. The latter was a holy man, who, from

* Germania Sacra, tom. i. 307.

† Annales Monast. Burton, Rer. Anglic. Scriptorum, tom. i. 303.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.

being a curate, became a pilgrim to the holy land, on his return, a hermit, and finally a Dominican friar; but so great were the services which he had rendered to the rustics while inhabiting his hermitage, in instructing and exhorting them to gain heaven, that the fathers, after admitting him into the order, charged him to resume his apostolic labours in that wild and sequestered valley. At first a few huts were thrown up round his cell, but by degrees so many were added, that a village was the result, which was the origin of the present town of Amarantha. The passage of the river Tamaga, which flowed by it, was very dangerous in winter, being wild, and wide in some places, and very deep and rapid in others. Nevertheless the peasants on the opposite side were continually in habits of risking their lives, both through desire of hearing the hermit, and also of transacting other affairs. Notwithstanding the difficulty of the undertaking, and the assurances of prudent persons that it could not be accomplished, the holy man resolved to construct a bridge across this great river; and such confidence did he inspire in the people, that he persuaded them to cut down timber, and carry stones, with which he succeeded in constructing a solid bridge, a work which they ever afterwards continued to ascribe to the efficacy of his devout prayers *. Peter d'Alamon, bishop of Sisteron, in the thirteenth century, is recorded to have employed most of his revenues in constructing bridges and hospices throughout his diocese †.

In 1240 it was charity and faith which enabled a poor youth, acting under the prelates of the Church, to raise bridges over the Rhone at Lyons and Avignon, which was a work that had baffled the might of three of the greatest emperors of the world,—Julius Cæsar, Augustus, and Charlemagne. At Avignon may still be seen in the midst of the flood of the Rhone, three arches of the bridge which was raised in so mysterious a manner. On one of them might be distinguished a little chapel. In more ancient times the passage was very dangerous. Kings of France, and many men of genius, had vainly attempted to lay the foundations of a bridge here. It was only St. Bénézet who could succeed. The old

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.
† Id. i. liv. 6.

legend says it was a boy twelve years old, guarding his mother's sheep, in the fields at Almillat, in 1242, who was commissioned, and finally instructed by an Angel, to make this bridge, which neither Cæsar Augustus nor Charlemagne had ventured to attempt. Mocked at first, and ejected from the city as a young Antichrist, he returned three weeks later, crying, for the love of Jesus, give me stones that I may begin building the bridge. In fine, he built it, and added a hospital at the foot of it, and then the child went to Rome and obtained indulgences from the holy father for the benefactors of the bridge and hospital. Afterwards he built a similar bridge and hospital at Lyons *. Finally, a society of hospitallers took charge of the work and of its repairs, though others say they had the merit of first completing what the child had only begun. The difficulty to the incredulous moderns will remain the same, whichever tradition you follow, whether you ascribe the work to a hermit or to a child; but historical facts are not, on that account, to be set aside; and it is incontestably true, that the constructors of innumerable bridges of great solidity, having hospices annexed to them, were religious men, monks, and anachoreits †. In the twelfth century there was a society of laics, on the same plan as that of the clerks Pontifices, whose object was to facilitate the passages of rivers by boats and bridges, and their chief central place was the great hospital of St. Jacques, in the diocese of Lucca, in Italy.

But to return to the hospital, the door of charity which opens to the sick poor, as the words inscribed over that at Ferrara, define it. We have seen that, in point of magnificence and beauty, it might generally be taken for the palace of a prince, and it remains to shew that, in regard to the internal administration, to the manners of those who served it, and, in short, to the whole spirit which reigned within its walls, it was, strictly speaking, a religious house, according to the definition in early times, "Domus religiosa," exhibiting and propagating not alone the mercy of the good Samaritan, and the assiduity of Martha, but the sanctity of the cloister, and the contemplative grace of Mary.

* Paradin, Hist. de Lyons, liv. ii. c. 43.

† D. Vaissette, Hist. du Languedoc, tom. iii. liv. 19. 46.

Hospitals like churches were placed under the invocation of saints, as that of St. Eloy, at Montpellier, of St. James, at Toulouse, of St. Andrew, at Bordeaux; and were consecrated to God in especial reference to some mystery of faith, as that of the Holy Cross at Joinville, and those at Marseilles and at Rouen, which are denominated of the Holy Ghost. Nothing of a profane or pagan character could be discerned in anything belonging to them. Their very aspect was religious; as might be witnessed in the picturesque Gothic front and portal of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, built in 1280 by Oudard Macreux, a pious citizen, for which only in late times a Grecian portico has been substituted. In fact, the ancient entry of that hospital led also to the church of St Christopher. It was usual over the gates to represent in sculpture the Saviour holding a book, as might be seen over the Hôtel Dieu at Lagny. Howard found inscribed at the entrance of the Hôtel Dieu, at Paris, these words, "This is the house of God and the gate of heaven;" the application of which he rashly ridicules, by referring to the material order of the house at that time, which was deplorable. Of this singular obliquity of vision, which more or less is evinced by all persons void of Catholic belief, when they are presented with religious truth in a form or combination new to them, the same author furnishes another instance, in styling "pompously devout" the inscription over the portal of the great hospital at Warsaw, which consists in these words—"Regi sæculorum immortali et invisibili soli Deo honor et gloria," than which it would be hard to conceive any more appropriate at the moment when suffering mortals are about to seek human aid for the remedy of their pains. At the entrance of the Hôtel Dieu of Paris stood an image of St. Landry, the founder, carved in very ancient times. In general some devout and solemn figure was sure to meet your eye as you advanced; so that you were prepared from the beginning for what followed; and in fact I know of nothing more impressive, more soothing, and delightful, than to visit one of these great Catholic institutions. The moment after passing the threshold, one perceives that it is a different world which exists within—that every thing has changed—that time stands still—that the manners of the middle ages, the manners of the blessed merciful, are

here in all their freshness; and then such a sense of peace rises up in the heart, that one almost envies the sick, who have permission to remain here awhile; for, alas! how many young men in full strength and health, how many aged persons without a positive visitation, must wish in vain to hear addressed to them such sweet voices as here whisper to the diseased? to see turned upon them such compassionate eyes as here are fixed upon the poor?

There are some, the poet saith, by nature proud, who, patient in all else, demand but this—to love and be beloved with gentleness; and being scorned, what wonder, he adds, if they die some living death? Oh, how many would rejoice to lie down this moment upon the bed of suffering, if they could but hope to see for once such proof that there were some of human kind who loved them thus, who pitied them thus! And what a rich compensation for a wound or malady in the body, to feel this wondrous balm, cheering and invigorating the intelligence, descending with the oil of gladness into the very heart's core! And have you now seen sickness, and are these the pre-eminent sufferings of humanity? Who need be told that, contrasted with the fate of many of these victims, while treading life's dismaying wilderness, without one smile to cheer, one voice to bless,—amid the snares and scoffs of human kind, contrasted with their condition in the world, and with what they have left behind them, when they were carried hither from the tents of sinners, this is nothing else but to breathe the air of Paradise, and to feel the peace of heaven.

The pride of learning and art may be wounded at the recollection that Camoens should have ended his days in a house of charity, and that Buonamico Buffalmacco, whose pencil left immortal traces on the Campo Santo at Pisa, should have found his grave with the poor in the cemetery of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, in Florence, in which house he died, an object himself of that mercy which he had dispensed to others, as member of the association which bears its name; but the thoughts of the sufferers may have been different from our thoughts, and their last moments sweetened by the very circumstance which we now deplore.

Independent of higher consolation, this novelty of being thus served for love must have imparted strange

delight to minds like theirs, acute and profound. Such service must always impress those worn down on the way of life with a feeling as if they were brought back to the state of youth and boyhood, when their smile was taken for sufficient payment. Alas! with what precise account has every mite of service been extended to them throughout the intervening years, till this port received them! In the world the hand that was to close their eyes would have required its due remuneration. Payment would have been asked for the last morsel that was placed within their lips, and there were persons, perhaps, who would expect some profit from them after they were in their coffins. What a miraculous change must it seem now, when troops of strangers are pressing forward to render them all kinds of service, without any view to gain in ministering to their wants!

Imagine not, reader, that I am indulging in any mere ideal picture, unsupported by facts; for be assured that the scene of many affecting episodes, worthy of being by poets sung, of many beautiful and sublime conversations, religious and philosophical, that would not be unworthy of the noblest pen, might with strict regard to historic truth be laid in the hospital of the middle ages. Modern writers of imaginary conversations need not go back to the Tusculan villa for a proper locality: they will find it nearer hand, in the hospice of the poor.

A great French physician, the Baron d'Alibert, speaks of a mysterious patient in the hospital of St. Louis, at Paris, who bore the name of Poor Peter, but whose real origin was known to no one, though it was evident from his language that he had received a finished education. He used to repeat by heart fragments of the Iliad and the Odyssey; and, having travelled over a great portion of the globe, it was his amusement to compare himself to Ulysses. His countenance was noble, his manner full of dignity, and the charm of his conversation attracted every one. He had been a soldier in his youth, and after his return from Africa, he used to live in the most obscure quarters of Paris, teaching arithmetic to poor children, and accepting hospitality wherever it was offered him. His clothes were in tatters, and he always carried a pilgrim's staff. The hospital of St. Louis at that time was an asylum in which many men of letters had taken refuge. This poor Peter, attended by a dog,

which never left his side, being received here, soon attracted general attention; and the Baron describes the interesting discourses which he used to deliver under the porches of the hospital. Among the sufferers whom he used to console were the translator of Bacon's works, a jurisconsult, some Neapolitan exiles, a poet, a painter, and some other artists. D'Alibert says that his countenanance wore that venerable air which the habit of meditation gives, and that, after some days, he took such an ascendancy over all the patients, that they used to regard him with a sentiment of fear and respect. The courts of the hospital are planted with trees, and it was under their shade that this old stranger used to hold, as it were, his school, inspiring his fellow-sufferers with resignation and courage. No one was tired listening to him; the old, the blind, the paralytic, the lepers, used to gather round him; and from about sunset, when his rhapsodies generally began, they used to remain seated on the grass till a late hour of the night. Once I glided in amongst them, says this physician, and I shall never forget the scene which presented itself to me. The heavens were sown with stars, the moon cast its silver light over the buildings around; the old man happened to be more than usually inspired—I could have fancied myself under the porch of Athens. It was delightful to hear the high sentences of wisdom from the mouth of an old man bowed down by the weight of years. A profound calm reigned through the hospital. The patients were permitted to remain listening to him, although the statutes require that they should retire to rest at determined hours. After fifteen months this venerable stranger died in the hospital, with all the sentiments of a devout Catholic. He bequeathed his dog to the poor leper, who had been always one of his most ardent disciples. His memory remained in great veneration, and as often as any patient evinced extraordinary resignation and courage, the usual remark was, he is like Poor Peter *.

From a consideration alone of the spectacle of sickness and death which a hospital presented, philosophers of the middle ages would apply to it the words of St. Gregory Nyssen, in allusion to the cemetery—*Φύσεως ἡμῶν μυστήρια*. They regarded it as one of the great schools

* D'Alibert, Physiologie des Passions, tom. i.

to explain the mysteries of our nature, and the secrets of human weakness; from which, as St. Chrysostom says, every one must return with a philosophic mind.

But let us enter, and judge from our own observation respecting the character of all within.

In regard to the material arrangement, we find that the wards of the sick were contrived with the utmost attention to the delicacy which the most susceptible mind could desire. In each was an image of the Saint, under whose invocation it was immediately placed, before which a lamp was constantly burning. Thus, in the Hôtel Dieu, at Paris, we read of the halls of Our Lady, of St. Nicholas, of St. Paul, of St. Louis, of St. Augustin, of St. Raphael, of St. John, of St. Michael, of St. Charles, of St. Antony, of St. Roch; and one may remark the tender and profound thought of those who destined those of Our Lady and of St. Raphael for the purpose of receiving persons who were to suffer surgical operations *. In the two great hospitals at Munich, which excited the admiration of Howard, the Italian custom is observed, of inscribing a passage from the Bible at the foot of each bed †. In most hospitals of Italy Howard remarks that the wards of the sick are as lofty as churches. There was the utmost care exercised to prevent noise and disturbance. In front of the hospital of Santa Maria della Consolazione at Rome, there were always two chains drawn across the street every night, according to the command of Pope Alexander VII., as an inscription states—Ne prætereunte strepitu quies amica silentii omnino ab ægrotantibus exularet.

To hospitals were also generally attached spacious gardens, for the recreation of those that were recovering, and beautiful cloisters, in which they could take exercise when the weather would not permit them to go abroad. Paradin says, that in the hospital of Lyons there is a vast hall with a huge chimney, in which the poor warm themselves, the men on one side, and the women on the other.

We have already been told of the splendour of the chapel which was annexed to these houses of mercy.

Among the officers and servants of the Hôtel Dieu at

* Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux de Paris.

† Howard, State of Hospitals.

Paris, we find enumerated the spiritual superior, who is the dean of the cathedral, chaplains of the choir, confessors, priests for the dying, master of the choristers, sacristan, organist, children of the choir, servant for the bell, and porter of the church *. The church was under the invocation of St. Christopher, and the form of dress, as well as the religious practices, used in the abbey of St. Victor, were established here. Ancient documents attest that in the hospital of St. Elizabeth at Treves, there were celebrated annually eleven hundred and forty-one masses or anniversaries †. The wards of the sick were generally so contrived, that the patients from their beds, without seeing each other, could all see the altar in the great church; so that during their sickness they enjoyed the inestimable consolation of being able to assist daily at the celebration of the divine mysteries.

It was a custom in the middle ages, observed by many great princes of the state and of the church, through humility and affection for the poor, to choose the chapel or cemetery of hospitals for their place of sepulture. This was the case at Lyons, where Cardinal Alphonso Du Plessis de Richelieu, archbishop of that see, desired that his body should be borne without pomp to the hospital of the poor, and there buried in a plain tomb, on which were to be inscribed these lines, which he wrote on his death-bed with his own hand—"Pauper natus sum, paupertatem vovi, pauper morior, inter pauperes sepeliri volo ‡." In like manner, John Gaschier, Seigneur of Fontgieve, who had held a high office in the judicial court of Clermont, and his wife, Anne de Fredefont, of pious memory, were buried in the hospital in that city, which had been their own dwelling-house till the year 1682, when they gave it up to the brethren of charity, to be converted into a hospital for the sick poor, whom they constituted heirs of all their property at his death §. So, also, the great heroic minister and pacificator, Lopez de Barrientos, bishop of Cuença, confessor of king John II., and grand chancellor of Castille, having founded a hospital for the sick poor in the city of Cuença, and

* Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.
† Hist. Hospit. S. Elis. Trev. 8.
‡ Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 338.
§ Gallia Christiana, tom. ii. 302.

another in his native town of Medina del Campo, in the kingdom of Leon, after a laborious life of eighty-seven years, desired to be buried in the chapel of the latter hospital among the poor, of whom he had always been the father and protector, and whom he constituted his heirs. In the archives of this hospital there was an ancient manuscript recording that such was his desire *.

It is in the hospice of St. Lazarus at Venice, which receives the mendicants, that you find the tomb of the illustrious senator and warrior, Lorenzo Dolphino, and also that of Aloisius Mocenicus, admiral of the Venetian fleet, whose body was borne thither, as the epitaph attests, amidst the tears and lamentations of the citizens †.

The same acts were repeated in the new world by the holy missionaries of Spain. Jerome de Loaysa, who first ruled the see of Lima, having founded in that city the great hospital of St. Anne, to which he left a yearly revenue of sixteen thousand crowns, chose to be interred within it among the poor ‡. In fact there were occasions when the prince and the noble might wish in vain to be buried like them; for, during a general interdict, the body of the beggar or of the stranger pilgrim might be committed to a holy grave in consecrated ground, while that of the knight would have to remain in the mortuary hall of his own good castle, though it were to lie unburied till devoured by rats, like that of Raymund VI., Count of Toulouse §.

The administration of hospitals in ages of faith is a theme that would admit of many and most interesting illustrations. Paradin says, that every one on being first admitted into the hospital at Lyons, is confessed, and then mercifully absolved ||. The statutes of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, drawn up in the thirteenth century, declare as follows:—"A patient on being received shall make his confession and communion; after which he is to be placed in a bed, and treated as the master of the house, and served every day before the brethren ¶." From this attention to religious duties, the moderns must not infer

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. iii. 21.
† Splend. Venet. in Thes. Antiq. Ital. v.
‡ Touron, tom. iv. liv. 29.
§ Hurter, Gesch. Inn. III. i. 352.
|| Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. 18. ¶ De la Motte, 49.

that any diminution of mercy took place when the persons admitted were found to be of false belief. Moors, or heretics, were received in common with the faithful; and the only difference observed was in exempting them from such parts of the interior discipline as necessarily implied faith in the observers. When Howard was examining the hospital at Bruges, the nuns indeed asked him if he were a Catholic, but on his replying that he loved good persons of all religions, they only replied, with a smile, "Well, we hope that you may die a Catholic."

In the Hôtel Dieu at Paris it was strictly obligatory on the governors to have in the house one priest who understood the German, and another the Irish language, and it was desired to supply similar advantages to strangers of other nations, on the ground that otherwise hospitality was but imperfectly exercised *. The chaplains never gave pain to patients who were not of the household of faith †; but their ingenuity and prudence were often evinced in a most remarkable manner in their endeavours, by sweetness and all ways of blessed charity, soothing the thorny pillow of unhappy crime, to convert obstinate sinners, or to win to the Church persons who had never heard her voice or seen her represented, except by enemies. I remember in one of the great hospitals of Paris having been shewn an old priest, who spent his days in going about the wards, making little presents to the sick, in order to win their attention; and I was assured that many who had entered the hospital with souls more distempered than bodies, in consequence of his gracious ministry were enabled to leave it Christians and new men. De La Motte, relating that the Hôtel Dieu is open to all persons, whatever may be their religion, observes, that it has had the consolation of never having witnessed the death of a Turk or heretic, who had not previously been moved by the force of example and charity, aided by the grace of heaven, to abjure his errors ‡. Asylums of this kind might almost have been termed houses of convertites, as well as of the sick; insomuch, that Pope Innocent III., in his epistle to the rector and brethren of the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome,

* Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpit. De la Motte.
† De la Motte, 94. ‡ Essai Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 127.

institutes a solemnity to be observed there on the Sunday, when the Church reads the Gospel relating the presence of Jesus at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and assigning a reason for the choice of the day, says that this house is constantly witness to the salutary marriage which is morally celebrated in the conversion of sinners between the spirit of man and the grace of his Creator *."

The persons who served the sick, as we have already observed, were not hirelings who studied only to maintain a just proportion between their wages and their merit, but religious persons who had chosen to devote their lives to their office for the love of Christ; and who seemed, as Dante says of saintly lights in paradise, happier made at each new ministering. Howard relates, that as soon as a patient is brought to one of the hospitals of Lille, a nun is deputed to receive him, who brings water, washes his feet, and kisses one of them, after which he is placed in a bed covered with the whitest linen. We can judge of the consolation provided for the sick by merely observing the number of these devout attendants. In the hospital of St. Méry, at Paris, there were eight sisters of charity to wait upon fourteen sick persons. In that of St. André-des-Arcs, where were only six beds, there were five sisters. In the hospital of La Roquette, twenty-four nuns had the care of twenty sick. In the hospital of Saint-Mandé there were thirty-four nuns for the service of sixteen sick persons. In the hospital of incurables there were seventy-four persons to attend the patients, four ecclesiastics, four officers, forty-three sisters of charity, and twenty-two domestics, which was allowing one attendant to five patients. In the Hôtel Dieu, which might receive more than three thousand four hundred sick, the number of religious ladies did not exceed one hundred and fifty, besides seventy novices: there were in its service twenty-four priests. In the Hôtel Dieu at Lyons there were one hundred and twenty sisters, and sixty domestics, brothers of the cross. In the hospital of charity at Paris, which was the chief house of the hospitalers in France, the proportion of persons assisting to the sick was one to two. There were fifty professed brethren and novices, but these brethren were charged with the affairs

* Innoc. III. Epist. liv. x. 179.

of numerous other hospitals of their order in the provinces. We may remark also, that when the number of sisters was more than sufficient, they held a school for children, to which they devoted their vacant hours. The great physicians who have treated upon the discipline of hospitals are unanimous in their expressions of admiration at the conduct of these devoted servants of the sick poor; and Howard, though a Protestant, bore the same testimony to them. Describing the great hospital of Warsaw, he says, "that the nuns are attentive and charitable, and full of tender care for the sick, as they are everywhere. The superior is affectionate in discharging her duties; and the looks of the inmates announce the love and respect which they entertain for her. At Ghent," he says, "that the attentive humanity of the nuns to the sick, the aged, and the mad patients, moves and edifies every beholder."

After visiting the hospital of St. John at Bruges, and witnessing the nuns who there devote their lives to console the sick poor, an ingenious traveller of the present day concludes her description with these words: "I could almost say that my idea of heaven was a place filled with sisters of charity." In allusion to the same hospital, Howard had remarked in general, that "it is to the nuns we are indebted for the vigilant care with which the sick are treated in all hospitals in Catholic countries." But to what do we owe the nuns? to the Church, which alone had the secret of creating them; to the Church in which this great miracle was wrought of producing a constant succession of persons, who devoted their lives to serve and help others, from motives wholly disinterested; to the Church, which moreover, with great practical wisdom, superintended all administration of mercy, and provided against abuse. Indeed with such care did the ecclesiastical authority provide for the proper discharge of these offices of mercy, that we find, in the thirteenth century, the celebrated Dominican, Vincent de Beauvais, commissioned by the Cardinal Eude de Chateauroux, apostolic legate in France, to superintend the reform of the brethren and sisters of the hospital of Beauvais *, and Robert Kilwarbi, Archbishop of Canterbury, among the very first acts of his government at the

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i.

commencement of the reign of king Edward I. visiting the hospitals, and taking measures to have them better administered, and to correct abuses which had arisen during the vacancy of the see *. Even the domestics employed in works requiring mere strength of frame, were, in some respects, invested with a religious character. In the hospital of Lyons they wore a cross upon their habit, and none were admitted to the class of brethren until they had given sure proofs of virtue and attachment to the poor. Tenon remarks, what an emulation this cross excited among them, and what important advantages from it resulted to the institution †.

In all these hospitals the religious superior was bound to teach the young servants their Catechism during Lent and Advent, and to deliver instructions on other days. All responsible offices were, however, discharged by the professed brethren and sisters, to whom were confided the gate, the kitchen, and the hall for medicines. In the hospital of St. John of God at Naples, Howard remarked over the table to receive provisions this inscription, "I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat." In the great hospital of Sancta Maria-Nova at Florence, Howard remarked, that the repast is always blest by a Capuchin friar before it is served by the nuns, twenty of whom reside in the house, which is opposite to their convent. In the very kitchen you found the order of a monastery, and the silence which was only interrupted by the rosary or the salutation of blessed Mary, while in whatever direction you turned your eyes you beheld images of saints, or some emblems of heaven's mercy. In many places monks undertook the service of the sick in hospitals. Nothing, in fact, is more ancient in the monastic order than a zeal to assist them. "Rising each morning repair to the sick that are with you," says the great St. Antony, in his Rule; and again, "Visit the sick, and fill their vessels with water ‡." We have already seen that the hospital of the monastery was often designed to receive all sick persons.

St. Nicholas's hospital, which was in a place under the castle of Pontefract in Yorkshire, was governed by the

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. i. liv. 4.

† Mém. sur les Hôpitaux. ‡ Anton. ab. Reg.

monks of Pontefract. In founding the Hôtel Dieu at Rheims, the halls of which hospital are regarded as the most ancient of the existing buildings in that city, Hincmar, in order to provide for the spiritual as well as temporal wants of the poor, placed in it four canons to serve them, who continued always to be monks *.

In the great hospital at Caen, in which was a fine church founded by a prior, and certain number of brethren, the sick were served by monks, who wore the habit of canons regular of St. Augustin †. Howard says that the convent or hospital of San Francisco at Madrid justifies the observation that one can make in all Catholic countries, that the hospitals which are in convents are the cleanest, and most distinguished for order and calm. When the Capuchin friars were first received in Rome, they established a certain number of their brethren in the hospital of St. James, that they might tend the sick in that house, who were always such as suffered under incurable maladies. There men might witness a zeal comparable to that of the blessed Macharius, who, in the ninetieth year of his age did not hesitate to make a most painful journey to Alexandria three times, in order to procure fresh bread for a sick monk, whom he was tending with a father's love. With such devotion did these holy men minister night and day in this work of charity, that the institution which had been in a state of decay before their arrival, became very shortly one of the best conducted and efficient hospitals in the whole city. The cheerfulness and alacrity with which these venerable men discharged the most disagreeable offices, made such an impression upon all beholders, that many persons of a superior condition, on falling sick, chose to be removed into that sacred house, in order that they too might experience the love of these brethren. The charities of the people being now directed to it, the revenues in a short time were tripled, so that the hospital which before could scarcely maintain a very small number of patients, was able shortly to admit a multitude from all quarters ‡.

* Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, liv. i. 116.

† De Bourgueville, les Recherches et Antiquités de Normandie, ii. 33.

‡ Annales Capucinorum, an. 1530.

Francis Titelman, who passed from the fathers of the observance to the Capuchins in 1535, though one of the most learned men in Europe, insomuch that Erasmus, whose writings he attacked publicly, used to say that he was afraid of no one but him, devoted himself with such assiduity to serve the sick in that hospital, that, if possible, he made himself the least of all the brethren. Whatever office was most repugnant to sense, obtained his preference. Nothing was too laborious or too ignoble for him. It was an admirable spectacle to behold this man, renowned throughout the whole Christian world for his erudition, making the beds of the sick and administering their medicines. Some secular persons, who had been his disciples at Louvain, asked him why he did not give lectures at Rome, or at least engage in some literary work,—to whom he replied, pointing at the sick men with his finger, "Lo, you see my books before you; these are my editions of Ambrose, Augustine, and Chrysostom, which I must study day and night *." This devotion of the Capuchins was not confined to Rome. On the first arrival of these friars at Genoa, they were placed in a certain building adjoining the church of St. Columban, in the neighbourhood of the hospital of incurables, where they served the sick during many years. The protectors of that hospital were so grateful, that they purchased ground, and built the convent of St. Barnabas, into which they were removed, but without causing any interruption to their former exercise of mercy †.

The order of Hospitallers originated in the charity of the devoted knights, who sought to protect the Christians in the Holy Land. About the time when Jerusalem was first recovered from the Saracens, Gerhard of Provence arrived in the holy city, and determined to devote himself to the service of his fellow Christians, in the hospital of St. John. So perfect was his charity, that he extended it also to unbelievers, and every tongue spoke the praises of his incomparable benevolence. In fact, the formula of the Bethlemite brethren was this, "I, brother, make a vow of poverty, charity, and hospitality; and I bind myself to serve the poor on their recovery, though they should be infidels, and suffering from contagious mala-

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1537. † Id. an. 1538.

dies *. These Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, or Hospitallers, like all the other military orders, had their origin from the black monks of St. Benedict. They were at first but lay brethren, under the abbot of St. Mary of the Latins in Jerusalem, and from their example the other orders arose. Elsewhere we had occasion to notice the wonderful phenomenon presented in the charity and self-devotion of these brave heroic men, who distinguished themselves as much in the wards of the hospitals as on the field of battle. In the twelfth century that brave and pious knight Henry Walpot Von Bassenheim, from the banks of the Rhine, was elected grand master of the Teutonic order, because his boldness and valour were equalled by his love and tenderness for the unhappy pilgrims. The Christians of the west mourned for the sufferings of the devout pilgrims to the holy sepulchre, and presently the order of the Hospitallers of St. John, and that of St. Mary's Hospital, were instituted to protect and console them: wonderful spectacle did the world then behold in the multitudes of German nobles, who felt themselves called to renounce the ordinary pleasures and honours of life, in order to employ themselves in serving the poor pilgrims in hospitals for the love of God †.

The hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome was the head house of an order of monks called from it, brethren of the hospital of the Holy Ghost, who had hospitals in various countries, in which they served the sick poor. Guido founded a house of this description at Montpellier, and there is a letter of Pope Innocent III. to the brethren who serve it, reminding them that the rector of the order must always be in Rome, to whom the brethren in all countries owe obedience and reverence, and according to whose advice the rectors of all other hospitals of the order must be chosen ‡. There is mention also of a hospital of this order in the diocese of Halberstad in Germany §. Spain, two centuries later, beheld the rise of a similar association, that was destined, however, to accomplish greater things.

Now comes before us, in most bright effulgence, another of these men of violence, who, by works of mercy,

* Héliot, tom. iii. 366.
† Voight, Geschichte Preussens, ii. 12.
‡ Inn. Epist. lib. xi. 104. § Id. lib. xi. 69.

sought heaven. His history we must briefly note, as he passeth on. St. John of God, born of poor and humble parents, in the city of Grenada, in the year 1495, became the founder of the brethren of charity, who were soon spread all over Europe. This holy man was at first a soldier and a traveller, though when but a youth he gave himself up as a servant to the hospital at Medino Campi, in order that he might exercise his charity in serving the sick poor. Subsequently he appeared to have lost the grace of piety, and commenced a reckless course of adventures and wanderings; but being reconverted to a religious life by the sermons of St. Avila, he finally devoted himself to the assistance and comfort of the poor in hospitals. He entered Grenada as a poor man, only earning enough each day for his subsistence by selling wood, which he used to pick up in the forests; he was without credit, and yet he formed the resolution of founding a hospital. Walking through the city, he saw written upon a wall, "House to let, to lodge the poor." Immediately he applied to the proprietor, who, without examining whether he had sufficient means, agreed to let him have it for a certain sum. Thus a poor man without a shilling, hired a house to receive the poor, and that was the origin of the great hospital at Grenada. The first thing he did was to call in the poor and the infirm; then he went out to beg alms for them, and from the first day he received enough to supply the most urgent wants of the institution. A chaplain of the king sent him three hundred and twelve reales, which were employed in purchasing beds. Many devout persons, nobles and others, gave him furniture and money. In this infant hospital, the sick poor were attended with the utmost care and tenderness.

The founder made it an essential part of his plan, to instruct and convert the souls of the poor whom he received, and he rejected no person however vile. Many priests, of their own accord, came to assist him, so that there was no want of attendance. Every night he used to go out to beg through the city, heedless of wind or rain, and cry out, "Do good to yourselves, my brethren." This mysterious sentence was drawn from that divine text which saith, "Benefacit animæ suæ vir misericors." In receiving every one without any scrutiny,

he only imitated St. John the Almoner, whose charity was conformable to the maxims of all the holy fathers. "Deus non cui detur, sed quo animo detur attendit." The Archbishop of Grenada, however, remonstrated with him on the danger, and spoke of what he heard respecting his receiving dissolute persons; but, he replied, "If my illustrious prelate and superior will condescend to visit the hospital, he will find no abuse, and he will be convinced that there is no one in it who deserves to be driven out but myself. Were I to receive only the just, our infirmary would be soon empty, and how should I be able to convert sinners? I confess that I do not acquit myself as I ought of such a ministry, and that I do not correspond to the grace of my vocation, and therefore I say to your grandeur, that I deserve to be driven out from this holy house." The supplies continued to be furnished with liberality. Dom Pedro Enriquez de Ribera, Marquis of Tarifa, besides giving one hundred and fifty gold crowns, ordered, that every day while he was in Grenada, there should be sent to the poor of that hospital one hundred and fifty loaves, four sheep, and eight hens. When the holy founder was seized with his last illness, he could only be persuaded to accept a more commodious lodging, by an order from the archbishop, who required him, on his obedience, to remove to the house of a noble lady, who wished to nurse him. Many of the brethren who succeeded him in the hospital which he established, were of illustrious origin, and had served in the wars. Such were Pedro Velasco, Anthony Martin, and Rodriguo de Siguença: the latter was a noble knight of the kingdom of Arragon, who, after serving twenty years in the army of the king of Spain, coming to his country, where he found his parents dead, and his fortune ruined, turned his heart to God, came to Grenada, frequented the hospital of John of God, and became so enamoured of the poor, that he finally embraced the order. Such was also Sebastien Arias, who became superior of that holy family. The propagation of this holy brotherhood was rapid: in the reign of Philip II. when it took rise, many hospitals were established in different cities of Spain. Philip III. gave public testimony of his affection for it, by going frequently with queen Marguerite, his wife, to visit the hospital of Madrid. All

the grandees of the kingdom used to do so likewise, and leave great alms to the hospitals, which were soon, to the number of fifty, divided into the two provinces, called of Andalusia and of Castile. The order also made great progress in the West Indies; so that it was divided into the four provinces of Peru, New Spain, Terra Firma, and the Philippines. Portugal also received the benefit of its establishment, as did Rome, under Gregory XIII. who sent brethren to found similar hospitals in Flanders, Sicily, and Savoy. At Naples, Milan, and Florence, they established magnificent hospitals. Shortly after they were called into Germany and Poland, and lastly France received them: they were invited to Paris by Mary de Medicis, the wife of Henry IV. who founded for their use, in 1602, the hospital of charity in the Fauxbourg St. Germain; and some years after they possessed twenty-four houses in the different provinces of that kingdom. According to their rules, no exceptions were to be made, but all persons were to be received, whether Moors or other infidels. The health of the soul was to be attended to with the utmost care, while that of the body was consulted: the patients were to be instructed and won from the false maxims of the world to those of Jesus Christ. The brethren of the hospital were to read to them, and to assist them to pray, and perform other spiritual exercises; so that these houses were true hospitals for souls as well as for bodies. Howard, speaking of the charitable houses at Florence, and observing that the hospital which one visits with most pleasure is that of S. Giovandi-Dio, repeats a remark which he had made in other places, "that these monks discharge their duty in a manner that does them great honour." Bernier, the physician, in his History of Blois, speaking of the hospital, and of the religious men of this order of St. John of God, who serve it, concludes with these words: "If the physician Herophilus had reason to say that remedies are the hands of God, there are particular reasons for believing it of those who dispense them in this place." The noble poets of Spain, Lopez de Vegua and others, celebrated in verse the renown of St. John of God, and the hospitals which he founded: and it is said, that the bare recital of one of these poems in the city of Segovia led to the conversion of sinners. In fact, the hospital of

Grenada, shortly after its establishment, was the scene and instrument of a miraculous grace. Antony Martin had imprisoned Don Pedro Velasco on the charge of having killed his brother, and had come to Madrid to hasten on the prosecution. Antony, though a proud knight, abandoned to a life of worldly pleasure, had nevertheless become known to St. John of God, by means of a practice, which was familiar to him, of visiting his hospital, and the holy man had recourse to prayer, in hopes of reconciling these two enemies. Meeting Antony in a street, he presented him with the crucifix, which he always held in his sleeve, and urged him to pardon his enemy, if he wished to be himself pardoned by Jesus Christ. " If your enemy," said he, " killed your brother, our Lord died for you and for me; and if the blood of your brother cries for vengeance, much more should the blood of your Saviour move you to forgiveness." These words, pronounced with a pathetic tone, pierced the heart of Antony Martin: falling on his knees before the servant of God, he promised with tears, that from that moment, from being the mortal enemy and the proud grandee, he would become the friend of Velasco, and the servant of the poor. " I will now lead you to the prison," said the convertite, " where I shall embrace Velasco in your presence, and then deliver him; and do you, in return, lead me to your hospital, where I may consecrate myself to God." After these words they walked together to the prison, where Velasco was each day expecting death. Great was his terror on seeing Anthony Martin enter, but the servant of God gave him speedy encouragement. The two knights embraced, and gave each other the kiss of peace; they mutually vowed an everlasting friendship; but thenceforth their hearts were wholly fixed on heaven. They both declared their resolution to serve the poor in the hospital with St. John of God during the remainder of their lives. It was an admirable spectacle shortly afterwards, as soon as Velasco could leave the prison, to behold the holy man walking through the streets of Grenada, having on each side these two friends, once such implacable foes, and now so closely knit together in bonds of grace: they were on their way from the prison to the hospital, which they never left afterwards. A long retreat and a course of

instruction developed and completed the conversion of these two noblemen, who became eminent servants of Jesus Christ.

Such is a brief outline of the origin of this celebrated order of the fathers of mercy, and of the hospitals which they founded. The forty-two first years of the life of St. John of God were spent in travels and pilgrimages, and in great labours, and the thirteen last were consecrated to the service of the poor, in the house which he founded for their reception. It is said that he used to nourish himself chiefly upon onions. His staff became a relic which was celebrated through all Spain. It was deposited in the hospital founded by the Lady Eleanore de Mandoca, who gave up for this purpose her own house and all her property, to enrich the foundation. Devout persons caused this staff to be encased in silver, in order to testify their gratitude for the cure of their diseases. His death had been lamented not alone by the Christians, but also by the Moors in the city of Grenada, who expressed in their language the admiration which they felt for his virtue.

It was, however, in general, to nuns and devout women that the care of the sick devolved in the great institutions of the west, and to promote these sisterhoods we find the charity of individuals continually directed. St. Francis de Sales, remarking that the charity exercised towards the sick who are not in extreme danger, "is only a counsel," adds this observation, "It is meritorious to visit them; it is still more so to serve them: but to devote ourselves entirely to them, like the Hospitallers, is the highest perfection of this counsel. and congregations of ladies are established for this end in several towns." In the church of Emery, in the diocese of Paris, was an inscription recording that Mary le Camus, wife of Michael Particelli, seigneur of Emery, had established not only the Confraternity of Charity, but also the Community of Sisters for the care of the Sick *.

In many places, as at Nieuport in Flanders, the hospital was served by sisters of the third order of St. Francis. Wherever these charitable and truly devoted sisterhoods had not been regularly established, their services

* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xiv. 433.

were sure to be called for when the days of trial and danger arrived. How sublime is the following brief notice, which occurs in the work entitled Gallia Christiana:—"This year, 1629, as the plague raged with great violence in Bourges, Roland de Beaumont the Archbishop called in the hospital virgins for the care of the poor *." Occasionally, but only in an incidental manner, the heroism of their individual members is recorded; and from what escapes the local historians in reference to them, one may form some idea of its action. During the dreadful fire, which consumed a large part of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris in 1772, one of the nuns, named the mother St. Louis, who was of a delicate constitution, snatched from the flames, and carried in her arms into the nave of the cathedral no less than fifteen patients, one after the other †.

Paradin says, that the poor in the Hôtel Dieu at Lyons are received and nourished by the devout sisters, one of whom, as superior, is called the mother. These women serve the poor day and night, administer their medicines, give them food, make their beds, wash their linen, and, when they have given them dinner, they go into their chapel, and render God thanks, and they have no other wages for all their service but the grace of God, which is preferable to all the riches of the world ‡.

The sisters of charity were instituted by St. Vincent de Paul and Mademoiselle Le Gras, in about the year 1635. These, with the sisters of Sain-Ville, made their vows annually, whereas the sisters of St. Thomas de Villeneuve, and the religious ladies of the Hôtel Dieu, took the four great vows. In all hospitals these nuns used to sleep in a common dormitory. The report on the general administration of the hospital of the city of Paris, published in 1823, contains these words:—"The models to imitate, which we find in the Hôtel Dieu, are not comprised in the material structure, but in the tender care of the nuns for the sick, in the assiduity of the chaplains, and in the skill of the professors."

When I resided in that capital, a young Irish student of medicine, being attacked with a mortal illness, chose

* Tom. i. 171. † Notice Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 5.
‡ Hist. de Lyons, liv. iii. 18.

to be transported to the hospital of our Lady of Pity, in order that he might have the assistance of the nuns of the order of St. Thomas de Villeneuve, whose attention and service to the sick he had been accustomed to witness in the course of his professional attendance there, and some time after he died in that hospital the death of the just.

Notwithstanding the number of these religious communities in the middle ages, it must be remembered that the persons who discharged servile offices towards the sick in hospitals, were not exclusively nuns and religious men for that purpose professed: for it was a common exercise of devotion amongst persons of every rank living in the world, to devote certain days, or certain portions of each day, to perform acts of this heroic charity. In fact it was regarded as a general duty, from which no Christian was exempt. "We should visit the sick," says a writer of the thirteenth century, "in order to comply with the bonds of nature, to imitate our Lord, to receive mercy for ourselves, and to secure the completion of our reward *."—"If we should see a sick person," said St. Ambrose, "let us not desert him; if any one in danger, let us not leave him: let us desire that the words of Job may be applicable to ourselves, that the benediction of the dying may come upon us. Benedictio morituri in me veniat. How many have derived a benediction from this verse †."

St. Samson was a Roman gentleman, a physician by profession, who having been ordained priest at Constantinople, evinced his charity by consecrating himself to the service of the sick in a hospital which he began to construct, and which the Emperor Justinian afterwards completed with royal magnificence. St. Francis Xavier, and St. Ignatius of Loyola, at the commencement of the institution of their order, gave wonderful examples of ardent charity in the most celebrated hospitals of Europe. The learned fathers of the society, whom Scardeoneo the Paduan simply designates, soon after their institution, as humiles homines et in pauperes omnium liberalissimi *, when at Trent took up their lodging in the hospital, and

* Vincent. Bellov. Spec. Moral. lib. iii. p. x. 24.
† De Bon. Mort. c. viii.

they had orders not to appear in the council until they had served the poor and the sick for several hours. In the hospital at Sienna is shewn the place, which is now a church, where the seraphic daughter of that city, St. Catherine, used to repose after rendering pious assistance to the sick.

Don Antonio, the eldest son of Don Felix de Guzman, and Donna Joanna de Aza, brother of St. Dominick, spent his whole life in the exercise of works of mercy in a hospital in which he was regarded as a saint†. St. Anselm, when prior of Bec, was particularly distinguished by the charity with which he visited the infirmary; and St. Thomas, when Archbishop of Canterbury, used also to visit the public hospitals, and tend the sick. How many sovereign pontiffs have been accustomed, like Pius V. and Benedict XIII. to visit the hospitals of Rome; and not content with superintending the mode of administration, by examining the provisions and beds, have shewn every mark of personal affection to the sick, tending them with their own hands, and consoling them with their sweet words. The duke of Orleans, son of Charles V., used to be constantly visiting the Hôtel Dieu for that purpose. Martha, daughter of the Marquis d'Oraison, of one of the most illustrious houses of Provence, died in 1627 in the same hospital, where she devoted herself to minister to the sick; and the duchess of Nemours, mother of the queen of Portugal, fell a victim to her zeal in carrying broth to a patient there, attacked by the small-pox. The beautiful lady Lucina, of the house of Stropeni, on her conversion by the preaching of the blessed friar Mathieu Carrieri, having been enrolled in the third order of St. Dominique, used, with consent of her husband, to perform these works of mercy to the sick in the hospitals of Soncino‡. Down to our times the Hôtel Dieu at Paris is accustomed to admit the visits of many ladies, noble as well as others, who are known under the name of Ladies of Charity. These pious persons come here to distribute alms amongst the convalescent, to console the sick by their religious exhortations,

* De Antiq. Patav. ii. 5.
† Touron, Vie de St. D. liv. i. 1.
‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. iii. 22.

to instruct them by reading devout books at their bed's side. The author of a late historic treatise on that hospital says, "These ladies are often seen in the morning assisting the nuns in the most painful offices, and in the evening appearing as the ornament of a brilliant company *. That devotion to the sick in time of pestilence, which we witnessed in the last chapter, was an heroic charity to meet extraordinary circumstances; but the ordinary exercises of the merciful in attending hospitals where there was no general excitement, seems to constitute a fact at least equally remarkable; for if we reflect upon the quality of the persons who undertook these offices, many of whom were of royal or most noble rank, and upon the nature of the duties implied, which comprised whatever was most humiliating and obnoxious to nature, we shall be convinced that nothing short of the Catholic religion, in all its supernatural vitality, with all its doctrines of mortification, and love of poverty as the love of Christ in his members, could have been adequate to produce this zeal.

Thucydides, indeed, in his account of the plague at Athens, says that those persons who made a profession of the greatest virtue were then induced through shame to visit the sick when deserted by their relations, and not to spare themselves; and that in consequence they, more than all others, fell victims to the malady †. Such conduct, no doubt, was honourable; but yet, how immeasurably did it fall short of the devoted ministry of the humble Christian, who offered himself, not through vain glory, but solely for the love of Jesus Christ, and through affection for his brethren! Moreover, it might be justly affirmed that many of the offices which this duty involved would have wholly changed their character, and been no longer associated with the idea of merit and grace if they had proceeded from any other principle, but that which is found in effective operation only within the Catholic Church. "If any man," says Plato, "were to dare to do what he performs for love through any other motive, he would reap the greatest reproach of philosophy: if, wishing to obtain riches, or kingly power, or any thing else, he were ready to submit

* Notice Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 21. † Lib. ii. 51.

to all the humiliations and hardships which are undergone for love, he would be prevented both by friends and enemies; whereas, performed through love, all these things possess a grace which makes them be considered lawful and fair."

An ingenious author, in an affecting passage of a celebrated book, has described the situation of a poor leper secluded in a solitary house at Aosta, who used to open the door of his garden from time to time to receive the flowers which were thrown to him by children. The good offices of the merciful to persons afflicted with this loathsome disease were not, however, confined to such shows of kindness; and the charity of devout persons to lepers is not more remarkable than the ingratitude with which it was often repaid. On most questions, unhappily, the human philosopher comes to very different conclusions from the Saint, and the difference is never more striking than when the need of placing oneself in contact with the miserable has been the subject of enquiry. Above all things, says Michael Scot, beware at all times of a man unfortunate by the work of nature; that is, of a man who hath lost any member, such as the eye or the hand: and the reason is, because whoever is rendered unhappy, by the very fact of his being unhappy, is opposed to the happy, and there is much injury that results to many from an unknown source: for a man can more easily guard himself from his public and avowed enemy than from an unfortunate person. And be it known that there is no creature of such good complexion, that if it loses a member, will not change its state, and that for the worse generally, and very rarely for the better, if it live long. Therefore is it said, "Cavete a signatis;" and elsewhere, "In homine signato in aliquo membro non confidas *." Admitting the truth of the observation, men, during ages of faith, only discerned in it an additional motive for the exercise of mercy towards such unhappy persons, since it taught them that by one and the same act they could practise two of the most eminent virtues of the interior life.

The ancient historians of Florence relate that on one

* Liber Physionomiæ quæ compilavit magister Michael Scotus, pars ii. cap. 24.

occasion a leper came to St. Antoninus, the archbishop, and complained of the conduct of a certain citizen towards him. The enquiry which the prelate instituted led to his discovery of a hidden treasure in the person of this citizen. He was a simple artisan, whose sanctity had been only known to God, and perhaps to his confessor. Devoted to prayer and to his work, he lived in a profound retreat, the labour of his hands supplying with necessaries himself and also many poor persons, to whom he distributed secretly every evening a part of what he had gained in the day. He passed the Sundays and festivals in the churches, or in serving the sick in the hospital of St. Paul; but in order to have an occasion always present of patience and charity, he had invited a poor abandoned leper to live with him; he nourished him, he served him as if he waited on Jesus Christ, washed his sores, and bore with his bad temper and the reproaches which he heaped daily upon him. This was the wretched creature who now came before the archbishop to lodge a complaint against his benefactor, as if all he had done had been not through charity, but under a strict obligation. The Saint soon detected the truth of the case, and went to visit the poor artisan, whom he exhorted to persevere, and reminded of the reward which awaited him in heaven *. The mercy evinced towards lepers in the middle ages is certainly one of the miracles of history. The moderns may well lift their hands in astonishment at mention of it, for in their society no one would ever imagine that such things could be. The amiable author who composed the Natural History of Selborne, seems conscious of 'nothing defective in his account of the wretched "pauper" afflicted with leprosy in that village, though he concludes it by saying, "In this sad plight he dragged on a miserable existence, a burden to himself and his parish, which was obliged to support him, till he was relieved by death at more than thirty years of age." He does not seem aware that there ever had been ages when such an object would have been esteemed a treasure, not a burden; yet he need only have looked back for proof of their having been such, to the short distance which separated him from Catholic times, when, as he remarked, "charitable persons bequeathed

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. iii.

large legacies to such poor sufferers;" and when, though there might have been wanting an observer on the spot, to describe the physical peculiarities of the disease in a work of natural history, there would assuredly have been in the village of Selborne, as well as in the city of Florence, some pious person to harbour and cherish him, though he were to live far beyond the age of thirty years, for the love of Christ. We have already seen the merciful and affectionate act of the Count of Anjou, and such deeds were continually coming to notice; for, not to speak of seraphic men, like St. Francis, who used to tend the lepers with his own hands, we find them performed by persons of all classes in common walks of life. John de Monte Mirabile, a high and puissant nobleman, carried a poor leper in his arms to the church. St Julian placed a leper in his own bed. One of the Counts of Champagne used frequently to visit a poor leper, commending himself to his prayers. Examples of this kind might be multiplied without end from our ancient histories; and to appreciate the force of them we should consider what kind of service this really was. "The leprosy," says Baron d'Alibert *, whose life has been devoted to the study of similar maladies, "is the most horrible of all the physical infirmities to which man is subject. It is impossible to behold the sufferer without horror; he is an object hideous and revolting. The disease brings with it also a train of insurmountable evils; it takes from humanity all its force; every thing becomes unnatural, even to the voice, which resembles that of a lion; there is something sinister in the very smile, which, so far from sympathising with our nature, fills the soul with terror." Now, to recur to the remark of Plato, and its application, what should we think of one who, for the sole desire of gaining money, should undertake day and night to attend such an object as this? But how sublime the love of those great princes, of those tender and beautiful women who, for the love of their Saviour, devoted themselves to this task with all the affection of their souls, watching over these wretched beings like tutelary angels, studying all their wishes, all their caprices,—identifying themselves, as it were, with this disfigured body, dressing its hideous wounds, and

* Physiologie des Passions, tom. ii.

cherishing in their bosom objects which make every other beholder shudder and turn pale! St. Elizabeth of Hungary used to sit down familiarly by the side of the poor lepers, and exhort them to patience and confidence in God. On one occasion her young ladies of honour detected her in the act of cutting off the head of hair which cruelly tormented one of these sufferers. She only smiled, and said nothing *.

The mysterious principle of an interior life communicated in the mysteries of the Catholic religion, produced that love of Jesus Christ and that desire of serving Him in the persons of the afflicted poor, which banished from the heart of men, however exalted in earthly dignity, all haughtiness and disdain, all fear of incurring ridicule, all selfishness, and personal vanity. and imparted to their manners the engaging, affectionate simplicity of youth; so that they would perform the lowest servile office for that purpose, without the least sense of being humbled, and without affectation or any thought of making a parade of virtue. "The worst of men," says St. Bonaventura, "if he saw Christ lying on a bed, would fervently and diligently minister to him, but the perfect man beholds Christ in every sick neighbour, and refuses no labour or disquiet to console him, knowing that this is more acceptable to God than if he had even ministered to Christ himself. I will discover to you whom my soul loveth. He lies in the infirmary; there he suffers pain and distress. Run and minister to him; and if we cannot all serve him, for many are themselves poor, at least we can all give compassion, and consider Christ. I firmly believe that if we neglect Christ on earth we shall not have him in heaven. Hear what he saith, 'I was sick, and you did not visit me;' and let us fear this sentence, my dear brethren. Let us not ask of him, as concerning another, Where dost thou lie? since we already know the place; for we know that he lies in the infirmary. Nothing remains but to discharge our duty †." Oh, tarry not! the hearers would exclaim, when the saintly teacher ceased, "let not time be lost through slackness of affection. Hearty zeal to serve reanimates celestial grace." This would be their cry; for men who touched the Catholic

* Ct. De Montalembert, Hist. de St. Elis. c. 8.

† St. Bonaventura, Stimul. Divin. Amoris, pars ii. cap. 7.

chord knew the short way to dissolve their hearts, and a few such broken simple words of a Bonaventura would move compassion more than all the verses of Simonides. But would you, as it were, behold with what ardent desire they sought to discharge that duty? Then look around you, and observe the monuments of those times which have escaped destruction; for, as Dante saith, the mind of him who hears is often loth to acquiesce and fix its faith, unless the instance brought be palpable, and proof apparent urge. Such proof is seen in the very structure of the ancient hospitals, for many of them, as undoubted records still attest, were erected from no other motive immediately actuating the founder than the longing of his soul to minister with his own hands to the sick, and to hear the words of Christ that would acknowledge that act addressed to himself at the day of judgment.

What house of mercy have we here? Behold its solid masonry, its goodly temple; a crowd of many poor men enter it, and at the portal stands a dame whose sweet demeanour doth express a mother's love. This is St. Elizabeth of Hungary, who hath given the greater part of her dower to build this hospital, expressly in order that she may serve the poor within it, as if she had been the humblest domestic. Such is the desire of these pious architects, who loved their work so inwardly that their eye did ever watch it.

If we look to Naples we shall find a similar example. Maria Longa, a Spanish lady, wife of John, the first chancellor in the kingdom of Naples, had contracted a nervous complaint in consequence of having drunk poison given to her by a servant, which deprived her wholly of the use of her limbs, and having been instantaneously restored to health in the church of Loretto, while mass for the sick was said, returned to her home deeply impressed with a sense of the divine favour which she had received. Her husband dying shortly afterwards, she gave up all her vast possessions to the poor, and founded the hospital of incurables in Naples, besides a convent of poor Clares, in which she subsequently took the veil. In this hospital the illustrious woman devoted herself night and day to discharge every painful office, as if, instead of being the foundress, she had been the lowest handmaid of the house. The Neapolitan nobility, accus-

tomed to the manners of the blessed merciful, nevertheless flocked to behold this spectacle! After some time had elapsed, she resigned the administration of the hospital to Mary Aerba, duchess of Termula, who, through her example and exhortations, had renounced all the vanities of the world, and devoted herself wholly to charitable works. Her last years were spent in her convent of poor Clares, and her last words to the afflicted sisters who stood round her bed were these:—Speak not of my good works, beloved children; what you ascribe to me were the gifts of God. If you take from me what belonged to God, there will be nothing left: lo, these wounds of Christ. O daughters, these are the merits which can alone gain me a place in heaven. Farewell! Behold! the spouse cometh *!

In the reign of Philip-le-Bel, Marguerite, second wife of Charles, king of Sicily, being a widow, built herself a small house outside of the town of Tournus, which is between Châlons and Mascon, and adjoining the house a magnificent hospital, where, as Nicole Gille relates, she used to serve the poor travellers with her own hands, and wash their feet, dress their wounds, and clothe them with fresh habits. Thus, when St. Jerome received in his hospital at Bethlehem the European pilgrims who fled from the persecutions of the Goths, we read that he not only washed their feet, but rubbed their camels, according to the example of Rebecca, who drew water for the camels of Eleazer, after having supplied Eleazer himself.

When Theoderic, Count of Flanders, returned home from Palestine, his wife, Sibilla, remained there, to serve God for the rest of her days. She was daughter of Fulco, king of Jerusalem, lately deceased, and sister of Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, then reigning. After she had come to the Holy City with her husband, she began to serve the poor and sick in the church of the hospital of St. Lazarus, and she used to minister with wonderful humility to them in their loathsome distempers. After ten years thus spent in the hospital, she slept in the Lord †.

* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1542.

† Chronic. S. Bertini, cap. xliv. pars ii. apud Martène Thesaurus Anecdot. tom. iii.

Marie-Thérese, queen of Louis XIV., and daughter of Philip IV. of Spain, used to visit the poor and tend the sick in the public hospitals, putting on a coarse dress, and serving them with food. When a certain lady of the court expressed surprise at some act of extreme personal mortification, and said that it might injure her health, that holy queen replied, "I cannot better employ my health than in serving Jesus Christ, suffering in his members." How many princesses of Brabant are recorded to have acted in the same manner! The counts of Troyes, of Blois, and of Flanders, the dukes of Burgundy and Normandy, used similarly to minister to the sick poor in the hospitals. Stephen, the holy king of Hungary, used to go alone by night to visit the hospitals, and unknown to serve the sick, and watch by their beds. To the present day the nobles of Italy and Portugal are in habits of discharging the same offices. Wherever, in short, the Catholic faith reigned, there was one rule and tradition of compassionate manners, to which no one ever thought of preferring the tastes or habits of a national character. The works of mercy were as well known as any of the professional duties of life. All knew where Christ was laid: as the holy friar said, they knew that he was in the hospital, and that nothing remained but to visit him. The duty was shewn to them in all possible simplicity of language, and wherever there was faith, it was affectionately and effectually fulfilled.

Such, then, were these great institutions, founded by the merciful, and multiplied over the whole world during ages of faith. Such was the object of their authors, and such the spirit which presided in their administration. It only remains to observe the means which were generally adopted in the middle ages for their creation and support. In most instances their founders had endowed them with landed estates, from the revenues of which they were permanently maintained.

The Hôtel Dieu at Paris had estates in Flanders, Normandy, and other distant provinces. It had great sheep-walks and pens at Aubervilliers for its flocks, from which every week the required number of sheep were removed to its particular shed, for the daily consumption of the house. It had a country villa for the lady nuns. In the year 829 Inchade, bishop of Paris, assigned to this hospital the tenth of the property which he gave to his

chapter. At Lyons, brethren of the house remained always in the country, in order to purchase cattle and corn, and the administration was exclusively placed in the hands of persons who devoted their time and labour to that work gratuitously. We have seen that at the hospital of Lisbon the annual receipts were always expended within the year, and at the Hôtel Dieu of Paris the funds of the institution used to be sold, and even its reliquaries and sacred vessels pledged, if at any time the revenue was found insufficient, as was done in 1709.

Pope Innocent III., after building at his own expense the vast hospital of the Holy Ghost in Rome, enriched it not only with his own patrimony, but also with many privileges. Notwithstanding its vast possessions, he desired that it should be assisted with the alms of the faithful, and with this view he instituted in the hospital a solemn station, to be observed for ever on the Sunday after the octave of the Epiphany, on which day the holy effigy of Christ is exposed in St. Peter's church to the veneration of the people; and he ordained that this should be borne processionally, with psalmody and lighted torches, from the basilica to the hospital, where the Roman pontiff should preach on works of mercy, and their efficacy in obtaining forgiveness of sins; and, in order that by example as well as words he should provoke the people to charity, there was to be a distribution of bread, meat, and money to all the poor who came there on that day*. The bishop of Chartres gave the revenues of a prebendal stall in his cathedral in alms to the sick poor of this hospital, which grant was confirmed by apostolical authority†, though Innocent ordained that a third of the sum should be paid to whoever served the office, lest the church of Chartres should be defrauded of its accustomed service.

The hospital of the Holy Ghost at Montpellier was confirmed by Pope Innocent III. in the possession of no less than eleven houses, with all pertaining to them, in different regions, of which two were in Rome‡.

Many hospitals in Spain at one time derived a certain revenue from the money which was collected at theatres

* Gesta Innocent. ii. III. 144.
† Inn. III. Epist. lib. x. 223.
‡ Inn. Epist. lib. i. 97.

and other public spectacles, so that when Peter de Tapia, bishop of Segovia, prevailed on Philip IV. to prohibit such as were losing their ancient religious character and becoming profane, and calculated to corrupt the manners of youth, he gave up one thousand crowns every year to indemnify them *. The Hôtel Dieu at Paris did not receive any revenue from the receipts at the theatres before the reign of Louis XIV., who gave to it a ninth of the money so collected †. The orphan hospital at Pampeluna derived part of its revenue from a kind of tax on all who played at tennis, which was a favourite game in Navarre.

Many hospitals owed their rise and support, like that of Grenada, to the casual bounty of charitable persons, and in the donations of alms to hospitals in ancient times there are many singular dispositions made. In the year 1168, Maurice, bishop of Paris, with the consent of his chapter, decreed that in future the bishop's bed, with all belonging to it, should be given, after his death, to the poor of the Hôtel Dieu. The act provides, that if the bed should not be worth twenty sous, the surplus must be given in money. The canons followed his example till 1413, when they agreed to leave an equivalent. Donations of the same kind were made also by the laity. Philip Augustus, in 1280, gave to the Hôtel Dieu the straw and bed stuffing of his house in Paris every time he left it to sleep elsewhere; and John II. confirmed this grant in 1358 ‡.

The departure of knights to the crusade was an occasion of wealth to hospitals, for no Baron or Paladin would have deemed his preparation complete, if, before leaving his ancestral towers, he had not given alms to the nearest house of mercy for the sick poor. Thus in 1202, Count Baldwin of Flanders, not content with enriching churches and monasteries, with an especial view to the object of his expedition to the Holy Land, took care to provide also for the hospitals, as for that of Aldenarda, and for the close of lepers at Ghent §.

The kings of France used to distribute at the begin-

* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. tom. v. liv. 36.
† Notice, Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu.
‡ De la Motte, Essai Hist. sur l'Hôtel Dieu, 27.
§ Miræ. Dipl. Belg. Sup. 84. ap. Hurter.

ning of Lent, among the hospitals and poor religious houses, a sum of two thousand two hundred livres, besides a quantity of corn and fish; and St. Louis changed into a law their alms, which in addition used to be given every day during that season, placing them in future at the disposal of the administrators of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris. Charles-le-Bel rendered perpetual the gift made by his predecessors to that house, of two hundred cart loads of wood annually from their forests, adding another hundred, on condition that the brethren and sisters should every year, at the four principal feasts, cause to be conducted with four horses and two of their servants, the relics of the holy chapel of Paris, to the place where the king should happen to be, provided the distance did not exceed thirty-four leagues. Philippe de Valois, in 1344, granted to them the right of free pasture for two hundred swine in his forest of Rez; and Charles V., in 1372, gave them the same privilege in the forest of Compiegne. The exemptions and privileges granted by the state, formed an important source towards the support of hospitals. Their goods and provisions were subject to no toll or tax whatever *.

The governors of hospitals and of houses for lepers in Paris used to station persons on one of the bridges every Monday to beg the alms of passengers for their support †.

The general collections for hospitals were made by means of trunks in all the churches, which used to be emptied on seven great days of indulgence every year. In 1663 the sum raised in Paris alone in this manner, amounted to twenty-one thousand livres. Agents were also sent for this purpose through different provinces, publishing the papal indulgences, and on Sundays and festivals there used to be a collection made in every church ‡.

The widow's mite, the poor man's wages, and the scholar's allowance, were joined to the alms of an Alfred or a St. Louis. In 1362, the Confraternity of Drapers at Paris decreed that on the day of their assembly a portion of bread, meat, and wine, should be given to every poor person in the Hôtel Dieu. The supply of eccle-

* De la Motte, Essai Hist.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. i. 9.

‡ De la Motte, Essai Hist. 117.

siastical habits every year at All Saints to all the priests and clerks charged with the divine office there, was provided by Oudard de Maucreux, a pious citizen, whose foundation for this purpose was commemorated in curious verses upon a brass plate in the chapel. "It is a remarkable fact," says the historian of Paris, "that in this capital a public establishment conceived with views of usefulness, and above all with the intention of affording instruction and edification, has never failed to obtain protectors and munificent benefactors from among the first class of its inhabitants *."

Nothing like ostentation belonged to the works of mercy in Catholic countries. In the report respecting the state of the Hôtel Dieu at Paris, published in 1663, the names of deceased benefactors alone are given, for the reason thus expressed, that the living had desired their alms to be in secret †. Until the breaking out of the revolution, it must be admitted that the donations of the French nobility to the support of hospitals were truly munificent. Vast sums had been given by many illustrious victims a few years before, of which the list was published by De la Motte. Indeed, in this respect, there had never been ground for complaint. It was in the year 1617, while Paris was agitated by civil discords, at a time when the Louvre beheld the murder of a Marechal of France, that a solitary unknown priest, son of a poor peasant, having neither riches nor credit, laid the first stone of the vast institution of the Association of Charity, which subsequently rendered the name of Vincent de Paul renowned throughout the world. We have seen what was the origin of the great hospital of St. John of God at Grenada, and most houses of his order had no other foundation but the alms of the faithful. Peter, who styled himself the sinner, in the fifteenth century, of whom nothing was known but that he was from Andalusia, and who lived as a hermit for many years on a high mountain, in the territory of Malaga, thence descending into the cities of men preaching on the love of God with such zeal and unction, that innumerable souls were converted, after making a pilgrimage to Rome, appeared in the streets of Seville as another Jonas, and called on all men

* S. Victor, Tableau de Paris, tom. xi. 179.
† De la Motte, 130.

to do penance, and with such force did he preach, that he was able to found a hospital for the poor with the alms which persons gave him, without his ever asking for any.

Delille, in his poem on Pity, has sung the merciful and unhoped-for asylum which was opened to the suffering exiles of France by the poor exiled priests of Somers'-town; and well may astonishment be awakened at the prodigious works of charity which are still being performed without any worldly aid by the worthy successors and fellow-labourers of Carron, at Chelsea, Hampstead, and many other places. In these true prodigies of mercy, which strike the attention of the most incredulous observer, we have only before our eyes the same operation which was constantly visible during the middle ages; and one may conceive what must have been the resource in the liberality of great prelates, when so much can be effected by the alms of the poor missionary priest, depending on charity for his own subsistence. Vanderburch, Archbishop of Cambray, besides supporting other hospitals and schools, used to give fifteen thousand florins every year to the hospice for poor maidens in that city *. Pope Pius V. gave twenty thousand gold crowns to the hospital of the Holy Ghost at Rome. It should be remarked also, that the gratuitous service of religious persons gave power to the administrators to employ all the resources of the house upon the immediate objects. The nuns and brethren performed every thing; they were even the architects; as when the hospital of St. Denis was rebuilt in 1725, under the sole direction of sister Michelle Michelon, who was then superior of that house. They were the farmers and artisans, employed as at Lyons, where the brethren of the cross take care of the estates, perform the offices of carpenters and masons, attend the markets to purchase the provisions, conduct the carts and the baths, and make collections.

When the epoch of the change of religion arrived in England, the greatest part of the hospitals and hospices shared the fate of the monasteries and other institutions which had originated in faith. We may read the history of those days in the conduct of the

* Gallia Christiana, tom. i. 249.

present Portuguese government, which seems to have rendered itself very familiar with the politico-theological measures that were adopted in the sixteenth century. At all times, proceedings of this kind are only a natural consequence of the opinions which supersede divine faith. The fact respecting England cannot be better stated than in the words of Weever :—"All monasteries," saith he, "being thus suppressed, it followed that, under a fair pretence of rooting out of superstition, all chanteries, colleges, and hospitals were likewise, by act of parliament, left to the disposal and pleasure of the king. And all these monuments of our forefathers' piety and devotion, to the honour of God, the propagation of Christian faith, and good learning, and also for the relief and maintenance of the poor and impotent, (if without offence I may speak the truth), all these, I say, for the most part, were shortly after, to wit, within the remainder of his reign, and the short time of his son's, king Edward VI., everywhere pulled down, their revenues sold and made away; and those goods and riches which the Christian piety of our English nation had consecrated to God, since they first professed Christianity, were in a moment, as it were, dispersed and (to the displeasure of no man be it spoken) profaned *." Since that time institutions of mercy have in many countries wholly lost the character which belonged to them universally in ages of faith. In those once happy regions which were devastated by the religious innovators of the sixteenth century, it would be absurd indeed to expect to meet with any thing resembling the works of faith. Protestantism, in one respect at least, is unearthly, for it cannot be traced by any visible monuments in the world. As a religion it founds no hospitals; private philanthropy, and the policy of government, must provide for such wants. The modern establishments are rather schools of science, often conducted by teachers who, like Epicurus, with the body make the spirit die, and establishments purely for the material advantage of society, without any view to the eternal interests of the sufferers who are relieved. The honour of having constructed even these poor and transient edifices, is claimed for by men

* A Discourse of Funeral Monuments, 115.

with a vanity, that savours of former unblessed times. Here are no holy images, no venerable habits, no solemn chants, no altars; but in their place long pompous and pedantic inscriptions, like that which the Moors placed over their hospital at Grenada, which extols the merit of its illustrious founders, and prays God not to leave them without due recompense. The grandeur and beauty of the ancient edifices may of course be sought for in vain; for when the poor had lost the eminent dignity which they had enjoyed in consequence of the power of the Church, and the principles of faith, that the asylums constructed for their accommodation should be in harmony with their new position in society, was but a natural and necessary result. Tenon, in his Memoirs on the Hospitals of Paris, has remarked, what an important effect the difference of religion produces in determining the construction of hospitals. In a Protestant country, he observes, there is no necessity for altars and images in each ward, or for a church and an altar within view of every ward. One minister, as he found in such cases, suffices for two thousand sick persons. A few tracts against Popery will do the rest. There is, therefore, no necessity to provide a convent for priests, or a convent for nuns, when one or two matrons, with adequate wages "to ensure their respectability," are sufficient to preside over the infirmary. Physicians in the last century, who visited England in order to examine the hospitals, came to the conclusion that they did not sufficiently provide for the delicacy which was required by the rule of Catholic manners in other countries, where there are always separate halls and galleries for exercise provided for the two sexes of convalescent. Moreover, such regular and solid structures could only arise when the action of the Catholic principles obviated the necessity of progressive enlargement, and secured provision for future ages, as well as for temporary wants *. Nor has the fate of these great institutions in other countries been without some influence from the general spirit of the modern civilization in which philanthropy and human beneficence have, to a certain degree, superseded the supernatural love and mercy, which constituted the soul of the ancient Catholic

* Tenon, Mém. sur les Hôpitaux.

state. The philosophers, when they had plundered hospitals of the wealth bestowed by pious Christians in the middle ages, proposed to maintain them by taxes upon gaming-houses, by the receipts of theatres, in which religion was every night outraged, and the collections made through the instrumentality of balls and other profane amusements; for like Julian, though at first they were for abolishing all such institutions as favourable to idleness, and contrary to the maxims of an enlightened economy, an opinion which has had its advocates in England in our days, and that too among men of the highest legal dignity, they afterwards turned round, and, like the same emperor, endeavoured to demonstrate that their religious or political systems could produce similar establishments, without any aid from the operation of the Catholic faith. These few institutions, which escaped in part from the general spoliation, were subjected to the administration of men, who found many objects to which their revenues might be applied, besides those to which they were originally destined by the blessed merciful. By dint of a lengthened and cunningly-devised system of persecution, the religious sisters were generally constrained to yield their place to persons who discharged them for a pecuniary compensation; and the moral amelioration of the patients, the furthering the work of their eternal safety, ceased to be an object to which any effort or any influence was applied.

Our course in reference to the correspondence between Catholic manners during ages of faith and the beatitude of the merciful, is here terminated; and I believe the result must be a conviction in the mind of every one who has accompanied me, that it was complete; and that it is to these ages we must look back, in order to witness divine mercy acting through human agents with the most effective power, and in the most diversified forms of development.

No one, after pursuing researches of this nature to any length, can suppose for an instant that the number of the merciful on earth has increased since those times, or kept pace with what is termed the progress of civilization and of moral philosophy. Whatever one may imagine the advance of mankind to have been in other respects, it is not a contemplation of its extent in regard

to their increase which can have thrown the ancient Catholic order of things into that dark shade in which our popular writers have been pleased so generally to envelope it. These few fragments, in truth, should be enough to convince even observers the most cautious or prejudiced, that in respect to benignity, long suffering, forgiveness, and compassion, never was there beheld on the earth a state of society comparable to that which it formed; to convince them that never was the great attribute of the Deity, proclaimed in the sacred page, which saith that all his ways are mercy, imparted to so great a multitude of the human race, or exhibited in such a variety of combinations to counteract or alleviate the evil which is attached to the present condition of our nature. To speak of the recompense which more directly constituted the beatitude of these past ages, falls not within the limits of an enquiry like the present; since, as St. Bernardine of Sienna remarks, of the triple reward pledged to the merciful, two parts, the promise of glory and of remission of sins, relate to an order of things beyond the limits of historic illustration; and of the third, the promise of a multiplication of grace, it would be in vain to expect a more complete view than what we have already enjoyed; for where should we look for evidence of its fulfilment, if we have not discovered it in the spirit of those who kept the choicest of their love for God, in the doctrine of blessed charity, as taught by all who explained to men their religious and social duties, in the conversation of those who sought to practise it, generations sinful, indeed, as a late poet saith, for Adam made all so, but tender-hearted, meek, and pitiful, in the mildness and forbearance of legislators and magistrates, in their willingness to permit the interference of the merciful in behalf of those who were obnoxious to legal penalties, in the visitation of prisoners, in the emancipation of the serfs, and the extirpation of slavery, in the spirit of mercy and humanity, which even predominated in war, in the efforts to screen the weak from the strong, made unceasingly by the clergy, who were as "nerves through which crept the else-unfelt oppressions of this earth;" in the principles and practice of a wise and compassionate tolerance, in the meek endurance and heroic forgiveness of injuries, in the prodigious

charity of the affluent to the poor, in their alms, counsels, and labours of beneficence, and, finally, in the hospitals and other foundations which were designed to minister to the wants of the miserable, and to alleviate the sorrows of the human race.

Here was, indeed, proof of grace multiplied. Here was assuredly a present and truly divine remuneration. Further to penetrate into the mysterious retributions of the disciples of love would be to transgress the bounds allotted to us. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." But when? and from whom? What answer can history furnish? Alas! it will be one strange and fearful; for it will tell us that many of these generous benefactors whom we have seen pass, dispensing mercy, were, while on earth, afflicted, ill requited, betrayed, oppressed, outraged; and if we pursue the enquiry further, and hope to find that at least posterity has come forward to make compensation by justice to their memory, the result will not be different. These ages are dark in name on earth, which accomplished all these prodigies of grace! What mercy hath any generation of insensate mortal creatures vouchsafed in return to the forgiving kings, whose faults only are remembered, while all their goodness is forgotten; or to the monks, who put an end to slavery, to mention but one out of their multiplied services, and who are proclaimed to have been the most useless of the human race? Where has been the mercy that was to repay the profuse alms, and the devoted service at the sick bed, and the repairing to distant lands to redeem captives, and all the acts of tender indefatigable pity by which the poor were delivered, and the nations rescued from darkness, and the prisons opened, and the fetters broken, and the whole servile race brought out of unmitigated misery to the consoling light and freedom of the Gospel? But still the word is unchangeable: it is a pledge which neither time nor "the long-tainted flood of evil through centuries over earth's slight pageant rolling," availeth to destroy; for all is written in the tablet of an everlasting memory, and that which is alone desirable remains secured for ever. Mercy from him whose smile is the light that kindleth the universe, whose justice is the beauty for which all thirst, shall these suppliant hosts receive before the winged throne in dazzling immortality,

when the lure whirled in the rolling spheres, on which their eyes had been for ever fixed, shall descend, silent, alone, in that last, ineffable benediction of glory which unfolds heaven.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

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